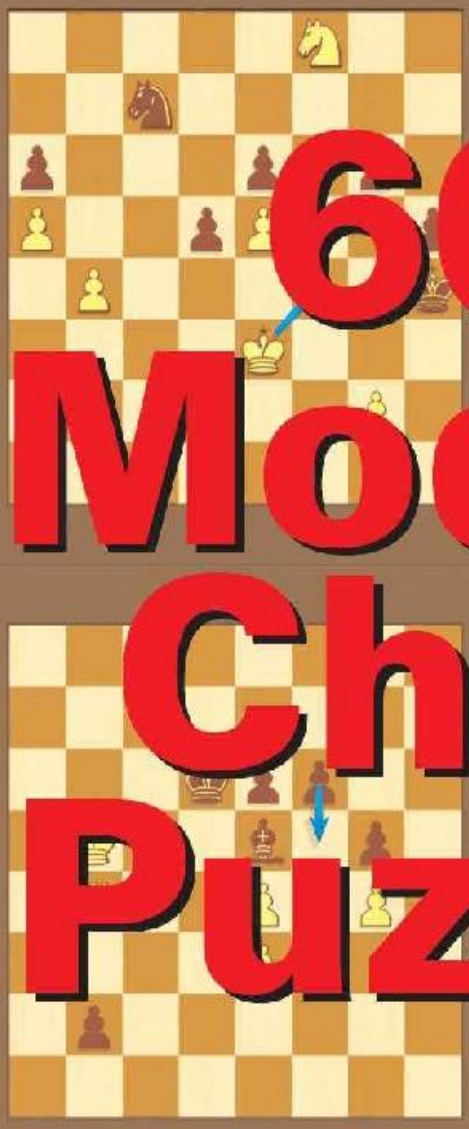
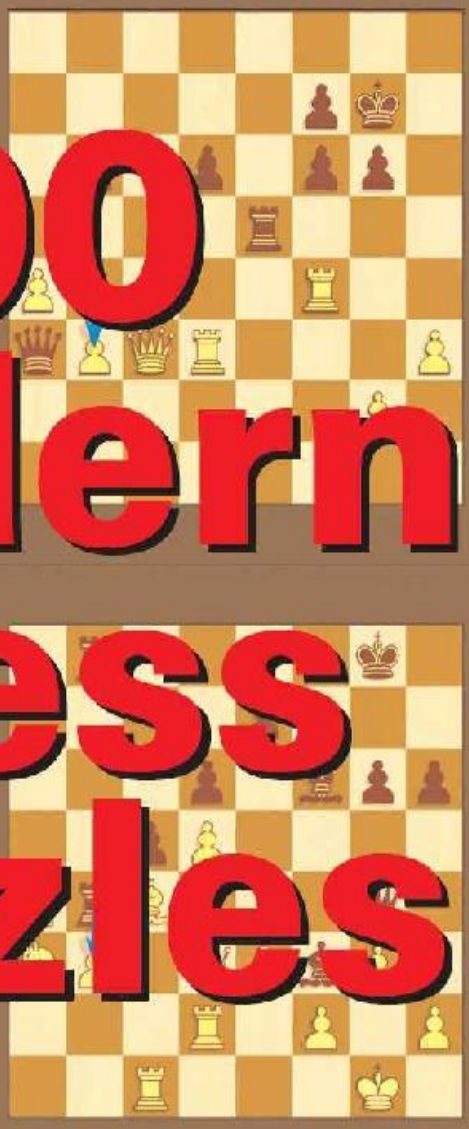
GAMBIT

600 Modern Chess Puzzles





Martyn Kravtsiv

Never-before-seen exercises to keep you sharp and expand your horizons

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Translated by Graham Burgess

GAMBIT

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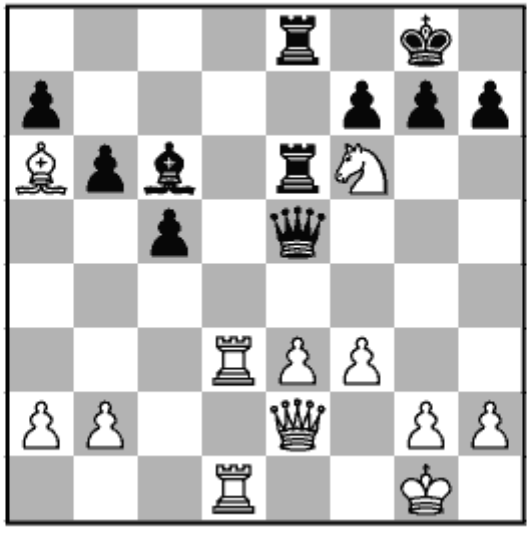
Introduction

I have played a lot of tournaments around the world, and sometimes people ask me, “How can I improve my game?” or “How did you become a grandmaster?”. I think the answer to this question is quite simple – you need to learn! After all, no one asks “How did you graduate from university?”

Chess is quite a difficult game and it takes years of training to learn how to play well. Then there is the question “How should one train?”. For this there are many ways – solving exercises, studying openings and endgames, analysing your own games, etc. But perhaps the easiest, quickest and most effective way to improve your overall game is to increase your tactical vision. Many good positions are lost because a key moment is passed by and a player misses the opportunity to win by a beautiful combination. This book is designed simply to help you improve your play by seeing tactics better.

Here are some examples of games from my youth where seeing tactics – or not seeing them – made all the difference. We start with a position where I overlooked a tactic by the opponent:



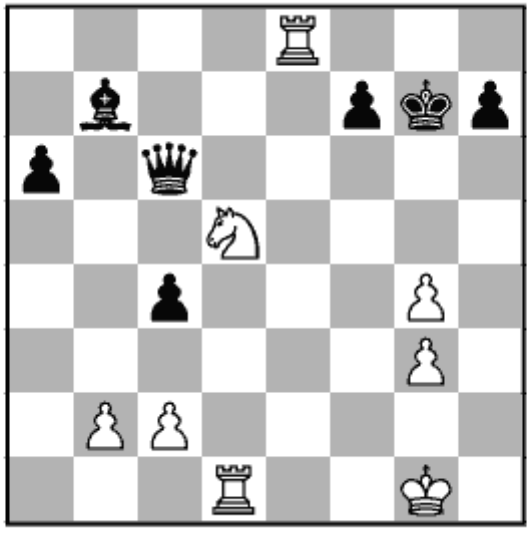
Black to play

Orujov – Kravtsiv

European Under-12 Ch, Peñiscola 2002

Here I incautiously captured the knight with my queen, which led to a well-deserved defeat: **24…Qxf6?** (after 24…Rxf6 Black is no worse) **25 Bc4!** (if Black now saves his rook, he will lose the bishop on c6) **25…h6** (25…R6e7 26 Rd6 +–) **26 Bxe6 Rxe6 27 e4 +–** and White won with his extra exchange.

In the next, I won with a nice tactic:



White to play

Kravtsiv – Zhdyniak

Ukrainian Under-14 Ch semi-final, Lvov 1999

At first glance, Black can be satisfied with his chances – in a position with both kings exposed, a queen is generally no weaker than two rooks. But White can win on the spot with a tactical blow: **36 Rg8+! Kxg8** (36…Kh6 37 g5+ Kh5 38 Nf6+

+–) **37 Ne7+ Kg7 38 Nxc6 +–** and Black resigned a few moves later.

And here's an example of a bad combination.

White to play

O.Kovalenko – Kravtsiv

Ukrainian Under-12 Ch, Kramatorsk 2002

12 Nxd5? Bxd5 13 Qh5

White saw that he could threaten both mate and the bishop, but failed to spot Black's reply, which solves both problems and so leaves Black a piece to the good. Your opponent's options should be considered carefully!

13…Rfd8! 14 Qxh7+ Kf8 15 c3 Bd6

and White soon resigned.

We shall take a closer look at a variety of tactical themes in the section 'Basic Tactical Ideas'.

We all know that the price of error in chess is very high. But while a good positional move or a well-played opening tend to give you a small advantage, the reward for a tactical blow is of a different magnitude, such as mate, winning material or saving a bad position.

This book is aimed at chess-players of a wide variety of levels, from near-beginner to those close to master level. It contains 600 exercises mostly from recent games, arranged in order from the simplest to the most difficult. If some exercises seem too difficult for you, then don't give up: come back to them after a while, after the level of your play has improved. Only look at the answer once you have made an honest effort to solve the problem and have decided what you would play.

I classified all the exercises into five levels of difficulty, from level 1 (easiest) to level 5 (hardest). Within each chapter, the easiest puzzles appear at the start, and the hardest at the end. Generally speaking, the earlier chapters feature easier puzzles than the later ones, though at the start of each chapter you are told roughly what to expect. Part 1 of the book contains exercises with some kind of hint or question below the diagram, whereas in Part 2 you are completely on your own: your task is just to decide what you would play.

I deliberately selected most of the exercises from games of little-known players to make sure that the positions will not be familiar to you. There are some games from grandmaster play included in the book, but many of these are taken from the analysis, and the exact positions did not arise on the board.

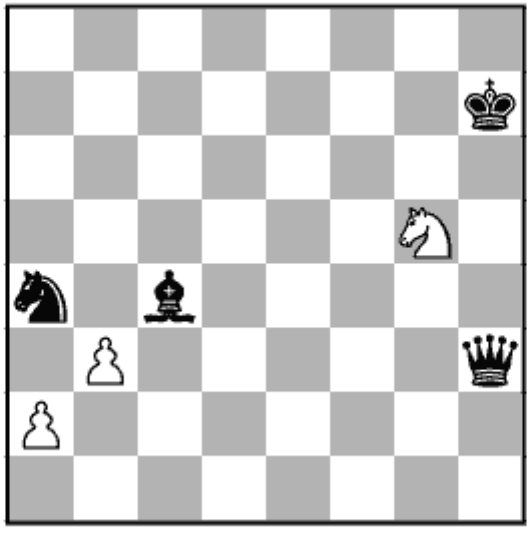
I have also included an index of themes. This is mostly for the benefit of coaches. I don't recommend looking at it before solving the exercises, as it would provide a pretty serious hint for the solutions, and so reduce the training value of the exercises.

I believe these 600 exercises will be very useful for all who solve them, especially for talented and ambitious students. All

you need is inspiration and time to improve your game. Good luck!

Basic Tactical Ideas

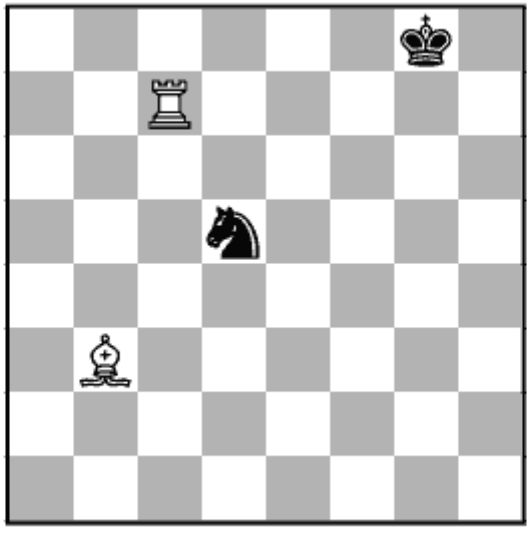
Fork



Black to play

Double attacks and forks are the most common chess tactics. A fork with check is particularly strong, since the opponent has no choice but to save his king, leaving the other piece (the black queen in this case) to its fate. A fork made by a pawn is usually also very powerful, since it generally doesn't matter if the pawn itself is lost if it is gaining a piece.

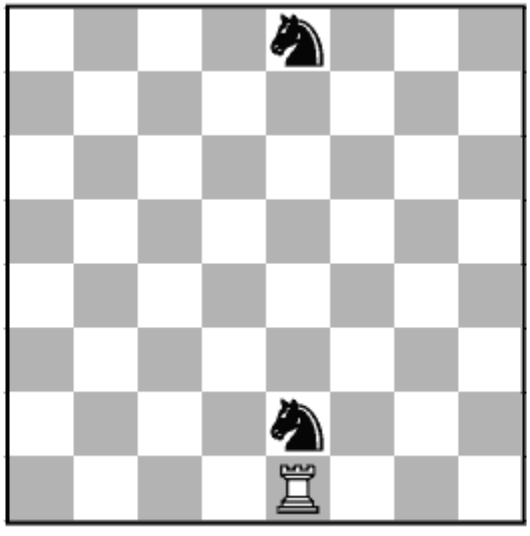
Pin



Black to play

Here the white bishop has pinned the black knight against its king. As a result, the knight cannot take the white rook on c7. In addition, the knight itself requires protection.

Skewer



Black to play

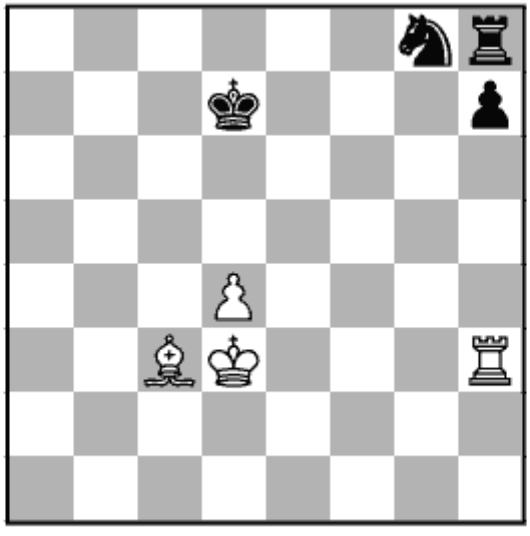
The white rook threatens two knights along the same line, and they cannot both escape at once. If the one on e2 moves away, the other is lost.

Discovered Attack

White to play

A discovered attack occurs when one piece moves off a line, opening up an attack from another piece onto an enemy unit. Here White plays **9 Bb5+!**, giving check to the black king and opening an attack from the white queen on its black counterpart.

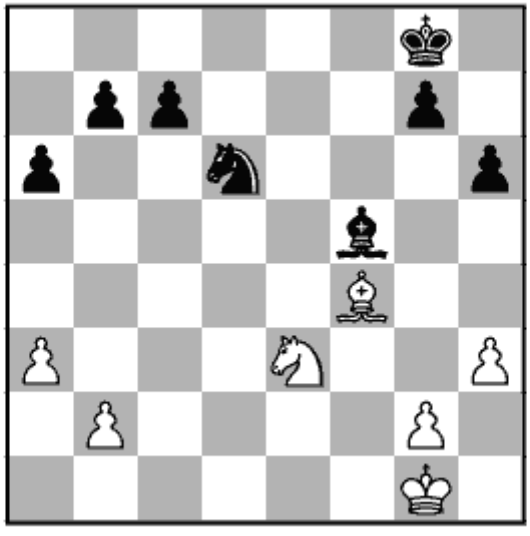
Discovered Attack / Trapped Piece



White to play

By advancing his pawn with **1 d5!**, White attacks the h8-rook with his bishop. Even though this isn't a double attack, it still wins a piece because the rook is trapped – it has no flight-squares.

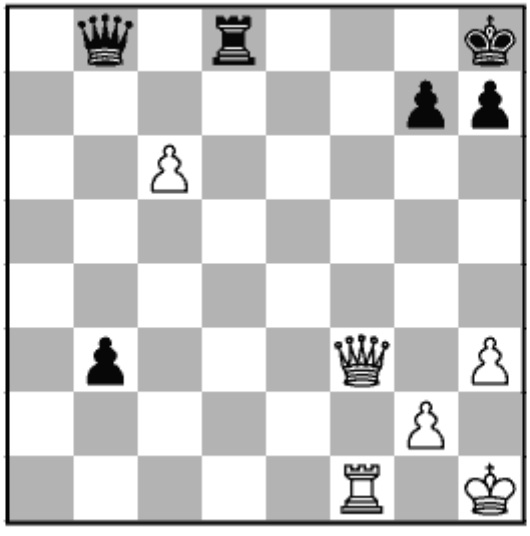
Destroying the Guard



White to play

The knight on d6 protects the f5-bishop. By simply exchanging our bishop for this knight, we leave the black bishop defenceless: **1 Bxd6! cxd6 2 Nxf5** wins a piece.

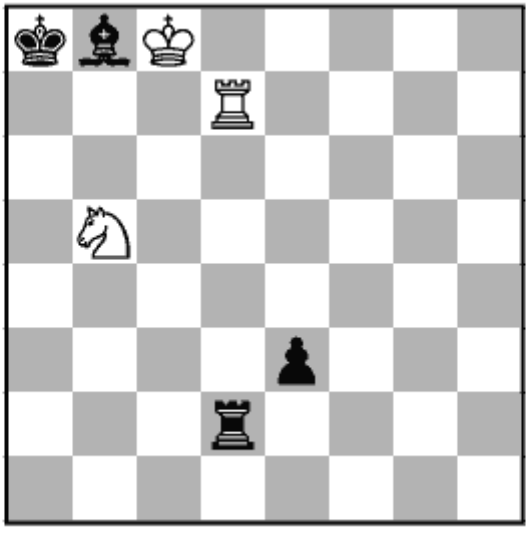
Deflection



White to play

This theme involves drawing a defensive piece away from a key role to make a tactic work. In this position, we distract the black queen from protecting the f8-square, where we then give mate: **1 c7! Qxc7 2 Qf8+ Rxf8 3 Rxf8#**.

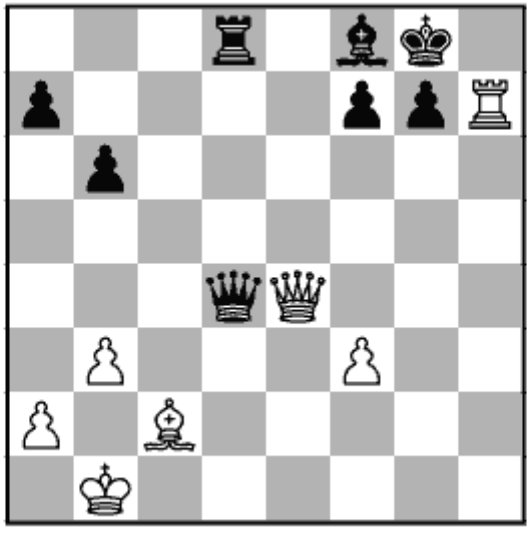
Decoy / Square-Blocking



White to play

A decoy involves dragging an enemy piece *onto* a square where it harms the defence. If most of a king's flight-squares are blocked, then even a lowly pawn can deliver mate. Here a rook sacrifice locks the king in on a8 so the knight can give checkmate: **1 Ra7+! Bxa7 2 Nc7#**.

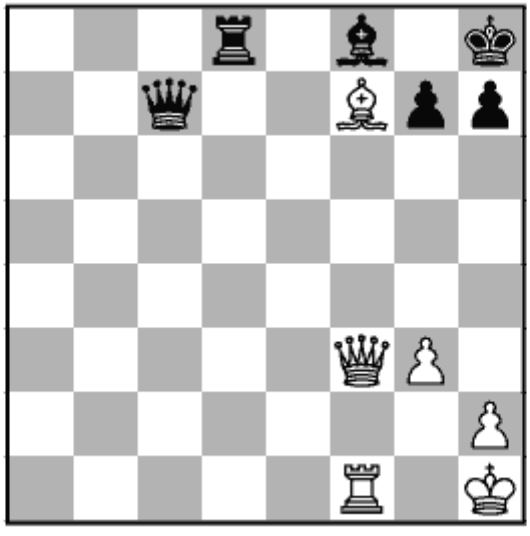
Square-Vacation



White to play

If the white rook were to vanish from h7, White could give mate in one. Therefore, White needs to find a way to give up the rook to make way for the queen: **1 Rh8+! Kxh8 2 Qh7#**.

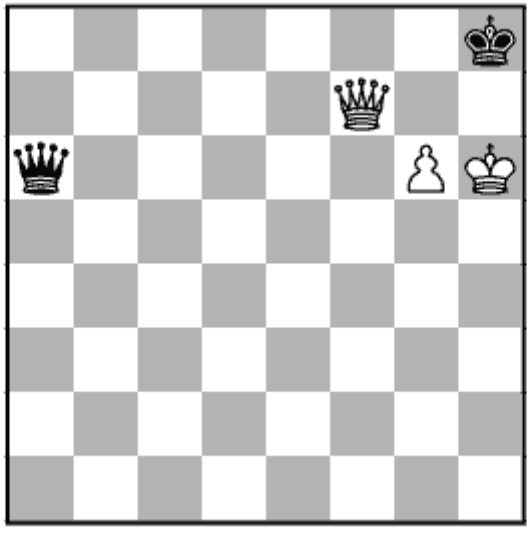
Interference / Line-Opening



White to play

If White simply moved his bishop, Black would have time to defend against the threat of mate on f8. But White can move his bishop so that it blocks the d8-rook: **1 Be8! Bc5** (or 1… Rxe8 2 Qxf8+!) **2 Qf8+! Bxf8 3 Rxf8#**.

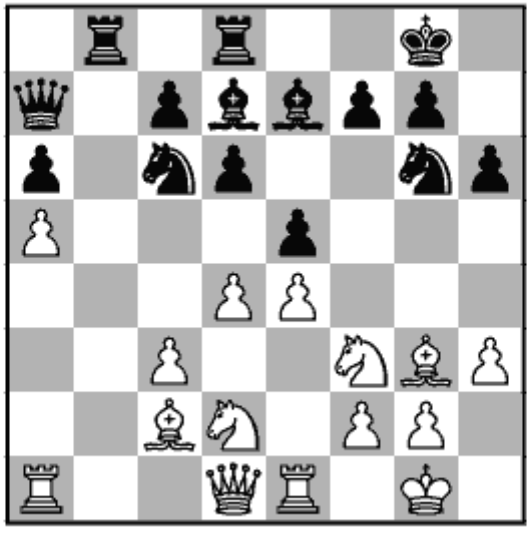
Stalemate



Black to play

When there are few pieces left on the board, you need to keep an eye out for stalemates. Here Black can draw by giving away his queen: **1…Qxg6+!** and after either capture it is stalemate.

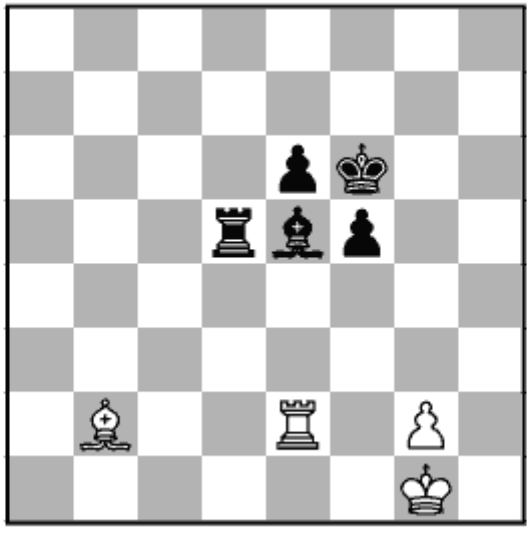
Trapped Piece



White to play

The black knight on c6 has no safe flight-squares, so all White needs to do to win a piece is attack this knight with a pawn: **22 d5!**.

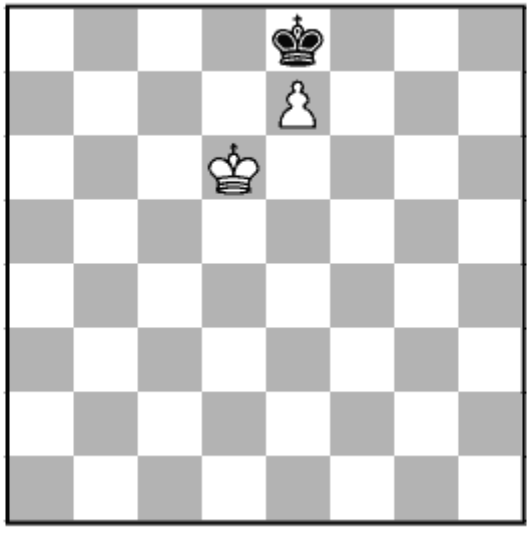
Zugzwang



White to play

After **1 Rxe5! Rxe5 2 g3!** any legal move by Black worsens his position, so he loses.

Mutual (or Reciprocal) Zugzwang



White/Black to play

Here we have a position of mutual zugzwang, where whoever is to move must weaken his position. If it is White to play, he must either give stalemate or lose his pawn, while if Black is to play he must move his king aside and let the pawn queen.

Symbols

+	check
++	double check
#	checkmate
!!	brilliant move
!	good move
!?	interesting move
?!	dubious move
?	bad move
??	blunder
+–	White is winning
+/–	White is much better
+=	White is slightly better
=	the game is equal
=+	Black is slightly better
–/+	Black is much better
–+	Black is winning
tt	team event
Ch	championship
1-0	the game ends in a win for White
½-½	the game ends in a draw
0-1	the game ends in a win for Black
(*n*)	*n*th match game

Difficulty Ranges for Each Chapter

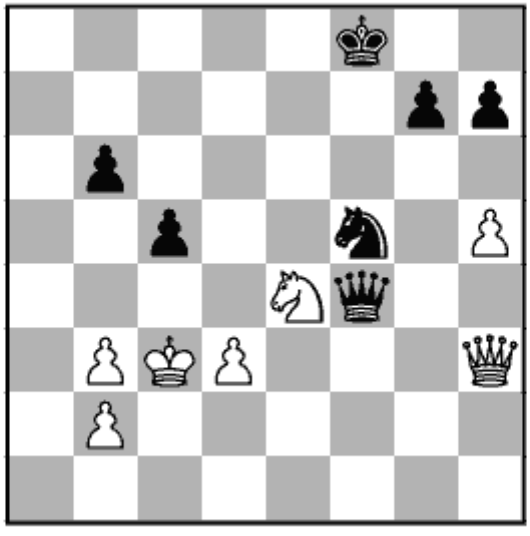
Chapter	Levels	Style
1	1-2	hints
2	1-3	hints
3	1-3	choice
4	3	hints
5	1-4	hints/endgame
6	4-5	hints
7	4-5	choice
8	1-2	no hints
9	3	no hints
10	1-5	no hints/endgame
11	4-5	no hints

Part 1: With Hints, Questions and Tasks

Our first seven chapters feature graded or themed exercises, all with some text under the diagram to guide you as to what to look for. Sometimes you will be asked a question or invited to choose between two moves. Even an indication that you should be looking for a way to win is a very significant hint, and one you wouldn’t get at the board.

1: Warming Up

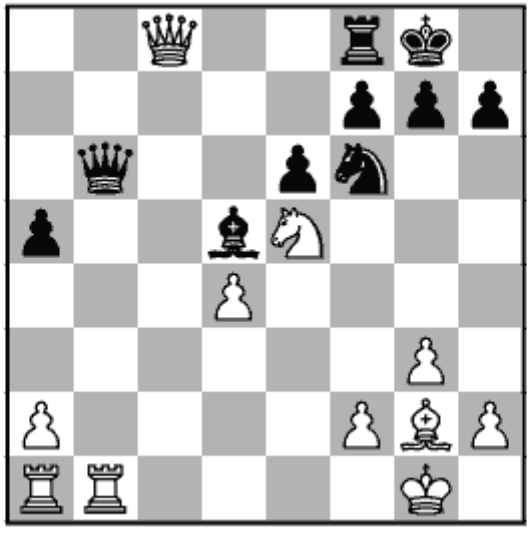
Our first selection of puzzles (71 in total) features positions of levels 1 and 2 in difficulty. Remember that even though all the level 2 puzzles come after the level 1 puzzles, difficulty is a subjective matter, and there is some randomness in the ordering in any case. So don’t give up if you get stuck on a particular position – you might solve the next one at a glance!



Puzzle 1: Black to play

White has just played 36 h5??. How did the game end?

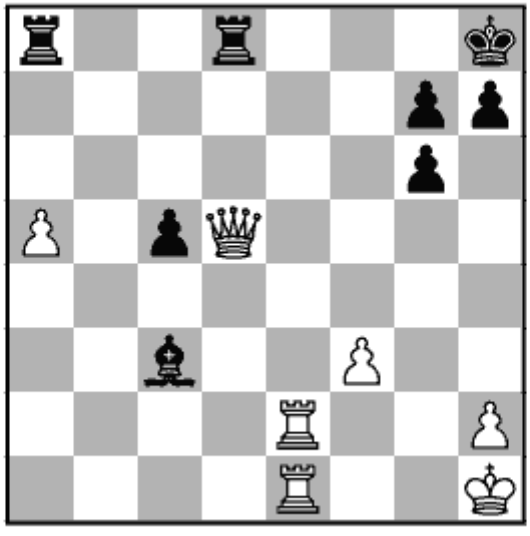
answer



Puzzle 2: Black to play

White has just taken a rook on c8. How should Black respond?

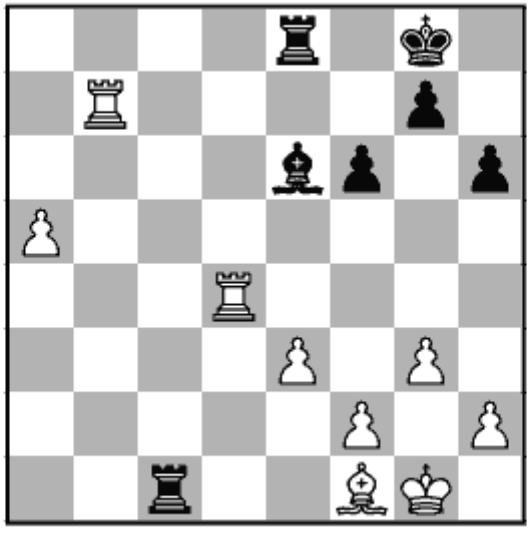
answer



Puzzle 3: Black to play

What should Black take: the rook or the queen?

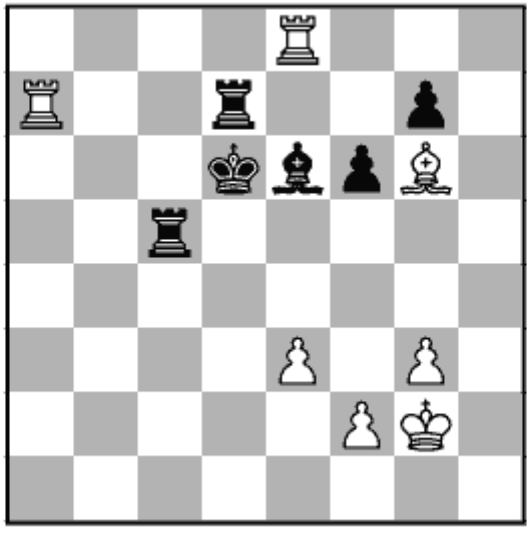
answer



Puzzle 4: Black to play

White has just pushed his pawn to a5 without noticing Black's threat. What is it?

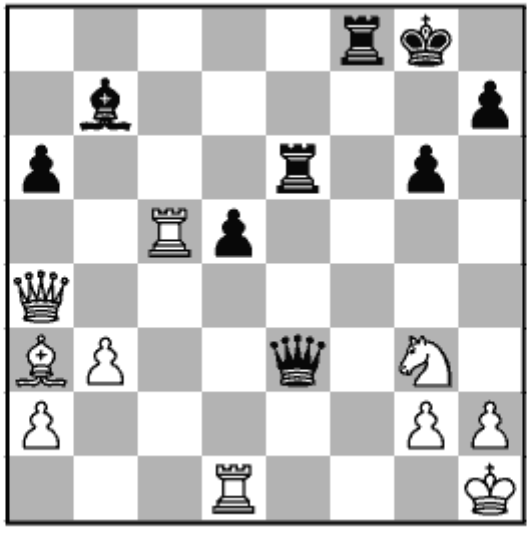
answer



Puzzle 5: White to play

How can White exploit the exposed black king on d6?

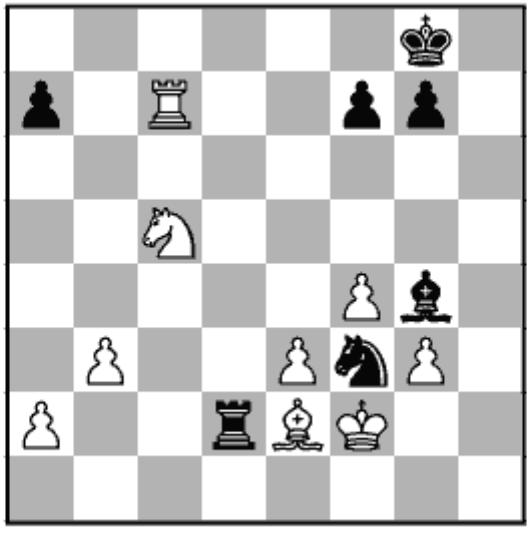
answer



Puzzle 6: Black to play

Black has sacrificed a piece. What did he have in mind here?

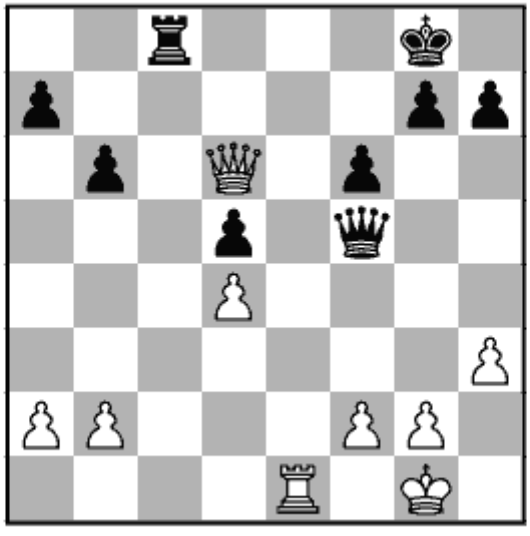
answer



Puzzle 7: Black to play

Can Black exploit the pin?

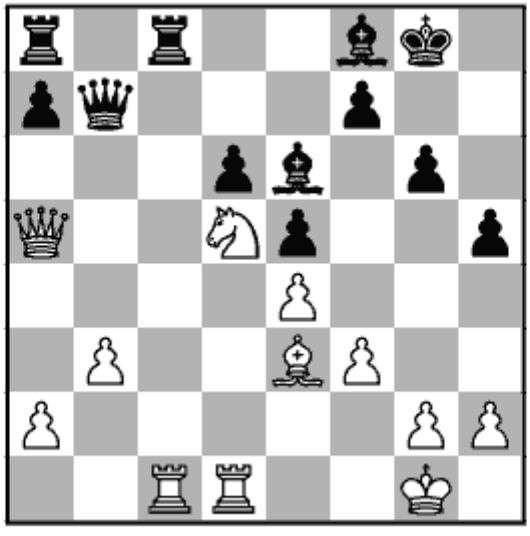
answer



Puzzle 8: White to play

Find a way to break Black's defences.

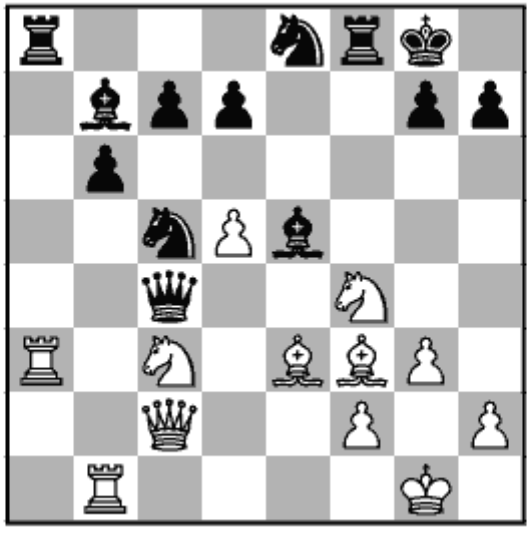
answer



Puzzle 9: White to play

What is the best way for White to win a pawn?

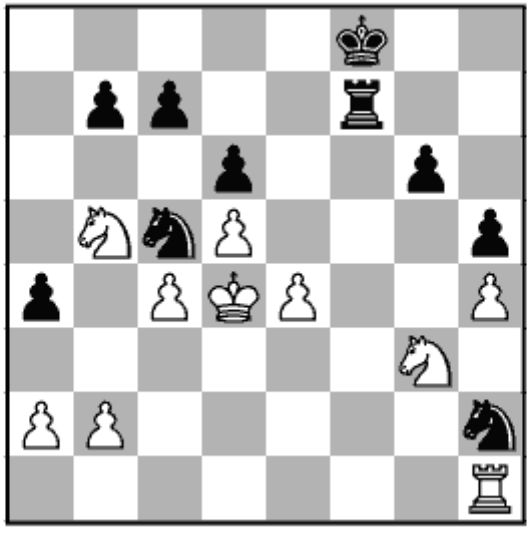
answer



Puzzle 10: White to play

The black queen has nowhere to run. Can you see a way to trap it?

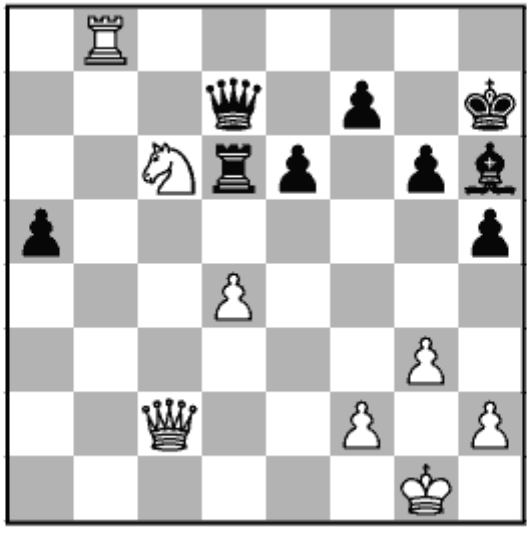
answer



Puzzle 11: Black to play

One strong move was all it took to make White resign. What was it?

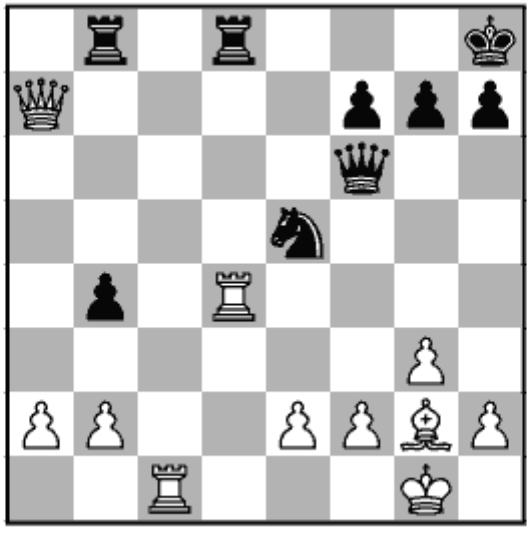
answer



Puzzle 12: White to play

Despite being a pawn down, White found a way to win. What was it?

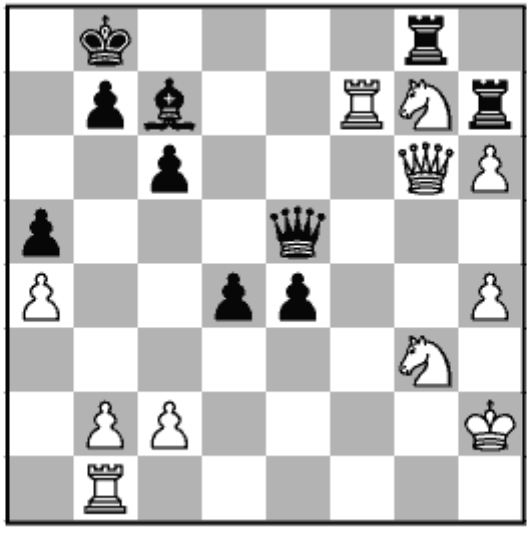
answer



Puzzle 13: Black to play

Black is two pawns down, so something dramatic is required.

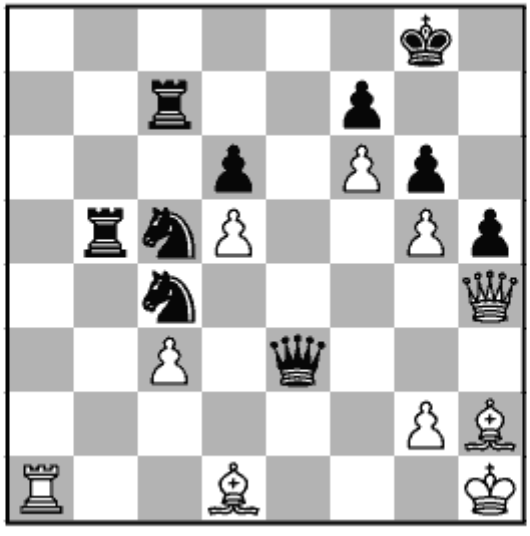
answer



Puzzle 14: Black to play

The knight on g3 is protected only by the white queen. How can Black exploit that?

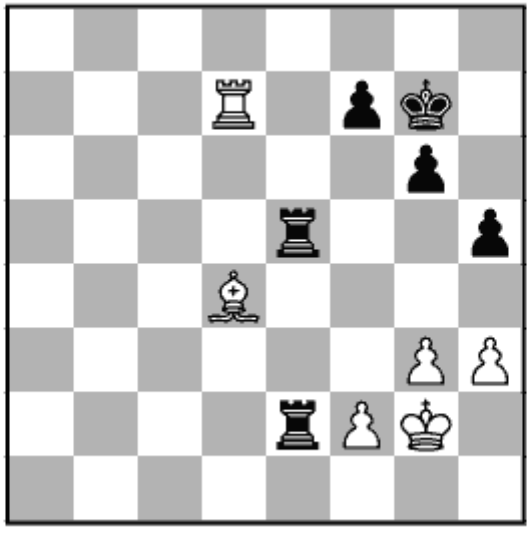
answer



Puzzle 15: White to play

Black has just taken a rook on b5. How should White respond?

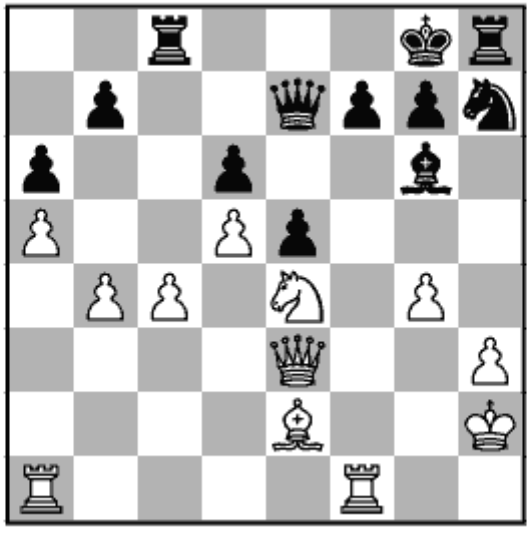
answer



Puzzle 16: White to play

How should White exploit the pin?

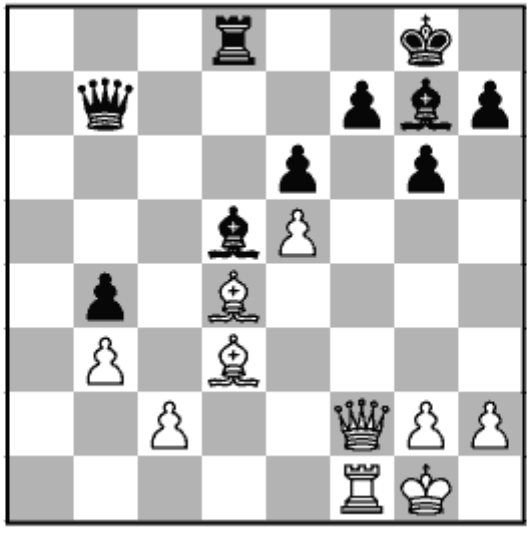
answer



Puzzle 17: Black to play

How can Black get a decisive advantage?

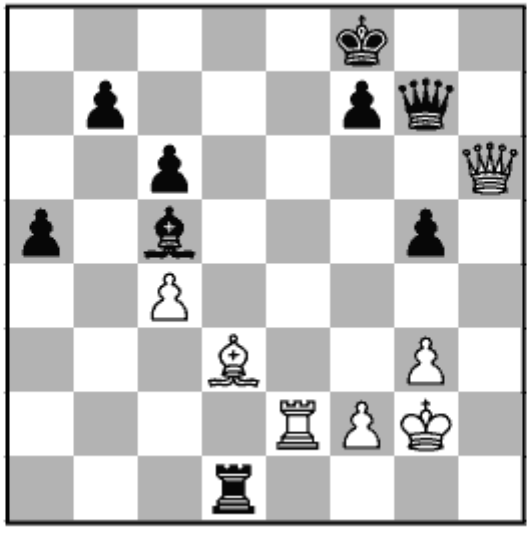
answer



Puzzle 18: Black to play

A strong move gives Black a decisive plus. Can you find it?

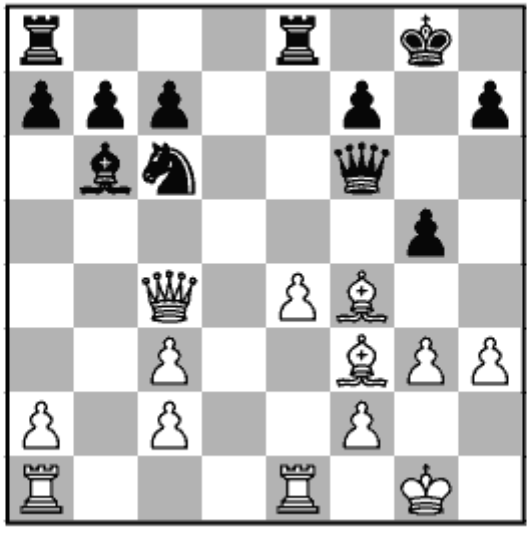
answer



Puzzle 19: White to play

How should White continue his attack?

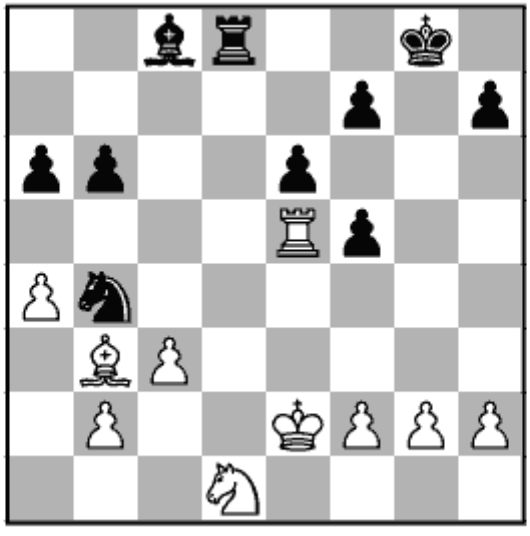
answer



Puzzle 20: White to play

Can White avoid losing one of his bishops?

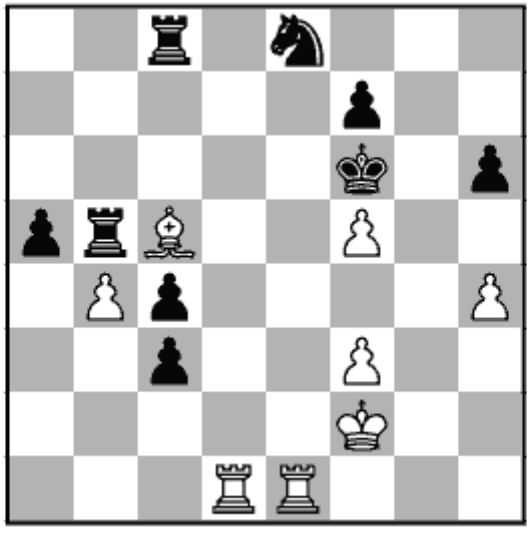
answer



Puzzle 21: Black to play

Where should Black put his knight?

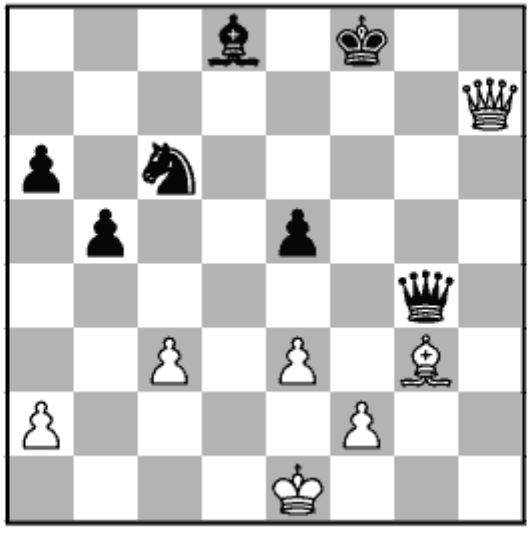
answer



Puzzle 22: White to play

White is a pawn down, but has a great position. Find his best continuation.

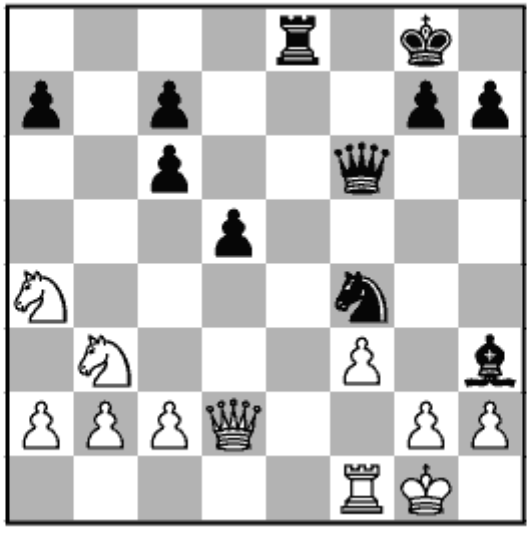
answer



Puzzle 23: White to play

White is a piece down. How does he correct that?

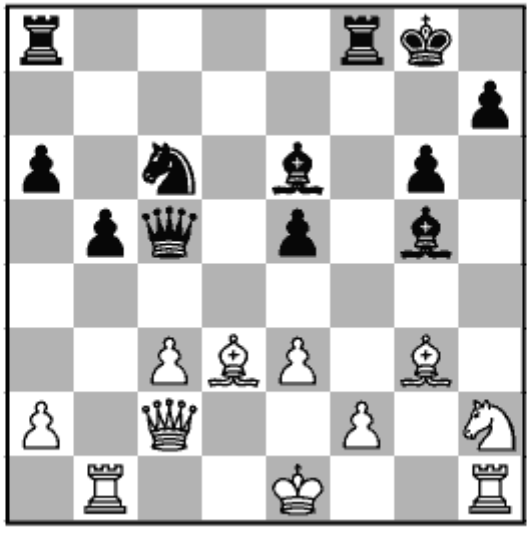
answer



Puzzle 24: White to play

Can White take the bishop on h3?

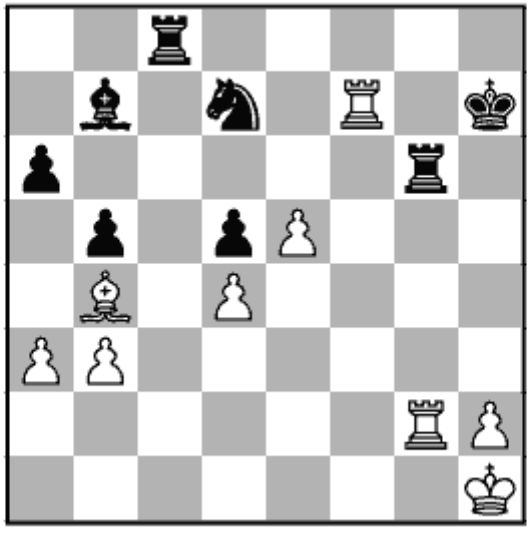
answer



Puzzle 25: White to play

How can White fix the main problem with his position?

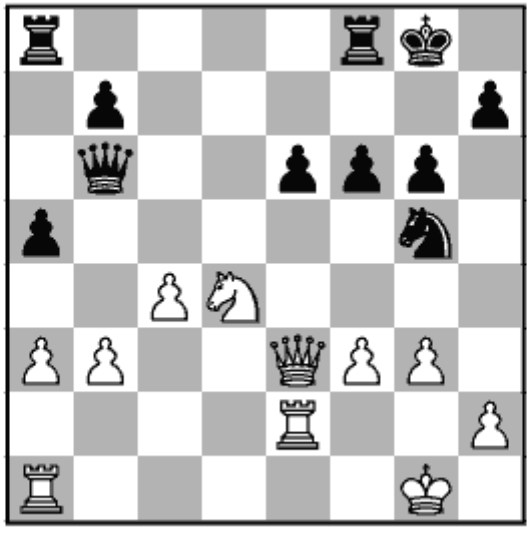
answer



Puzzle 26: Black to play

Where should the black king go?

answer



Puzzle 27: Black to play

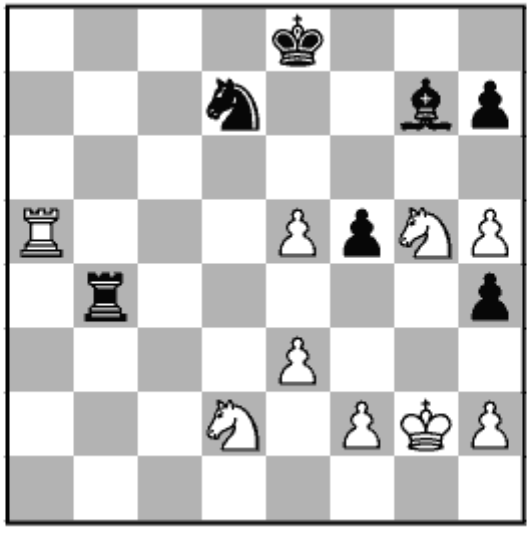
The fact that White's pawn has left g2 creates a fatal weakness. How does Black exploit it?

answer

Puzzle 28: White to play

Which way should White take on e5?

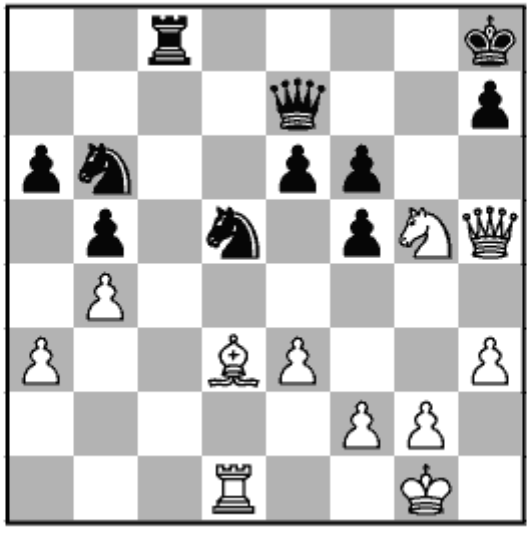
answer



Puzzle 29: Black to play

Black is two pawns down. What should he do?

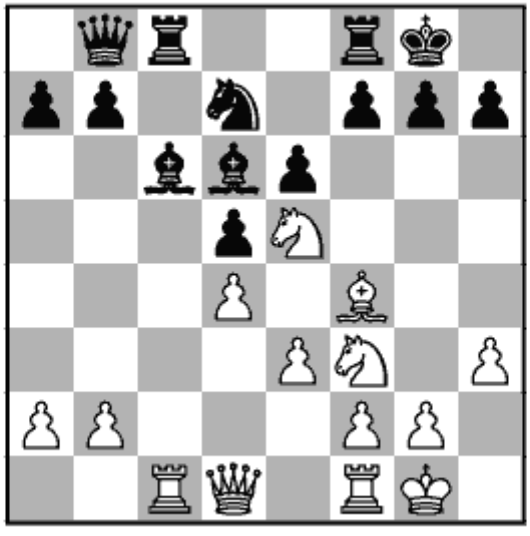
answer



Puzzle 30: White to play

White won the game in a few moves. How?

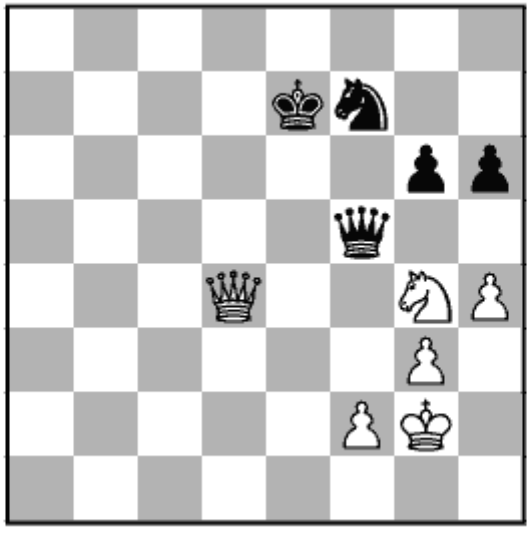
answer



Puzzle 31: White to play

In the game White played 15 Nxd7?. What far better move did he miss?

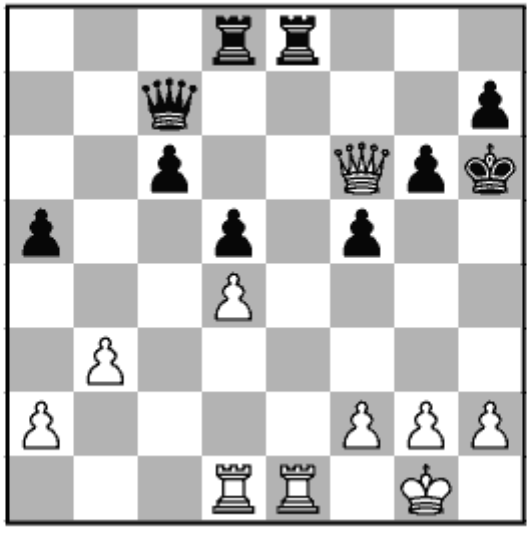
answer



Puzzle 32: White to play

One extra pawn is unlikely to be enough to win. So…

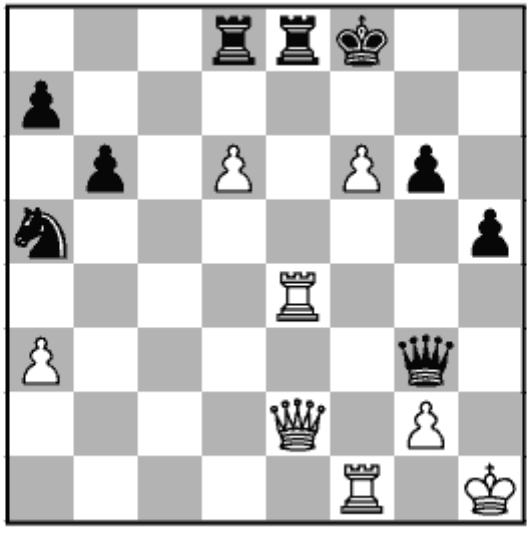
answer



Puzzle 33: White to play

How does White hunt down the black king?

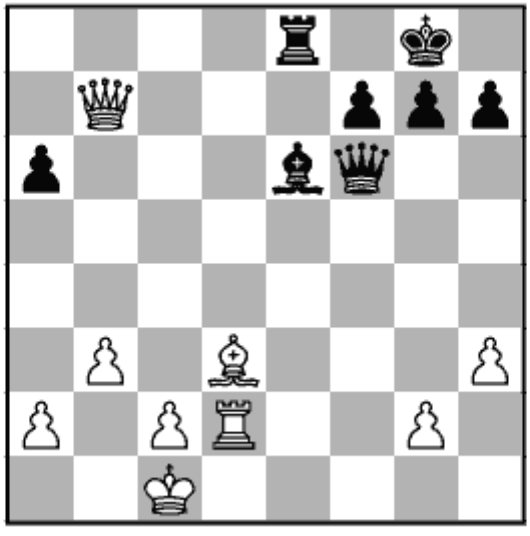
answer



Puzzle 34: White to play

White can win despite being a knight down.

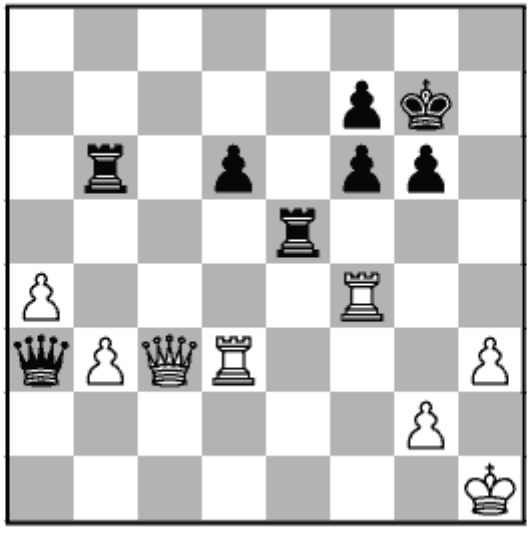
answer



Puzzle 35: White to play

Black threatens 28…Qa1#. How should White deal with that?

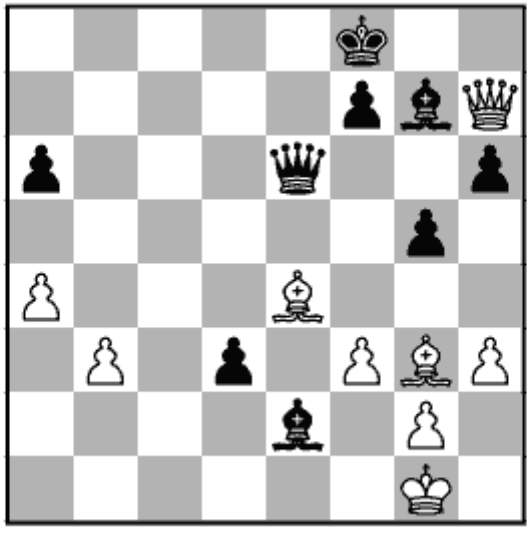
answer



Puzzle 36: Black to play

Does Black have a way to get the upper hand?

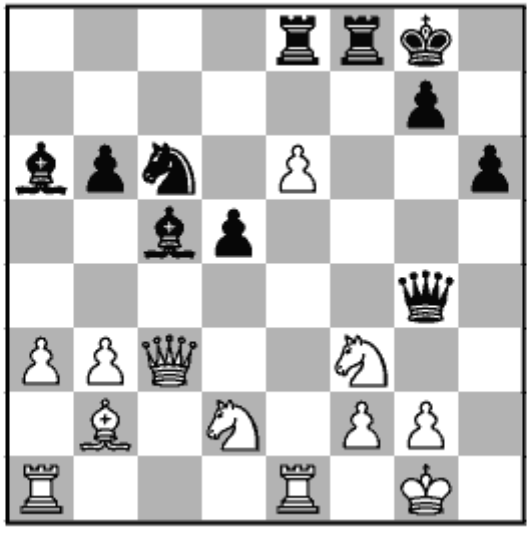
answer



Puzzle 37: White to play

White appears to be in trouble. How can he save the game?

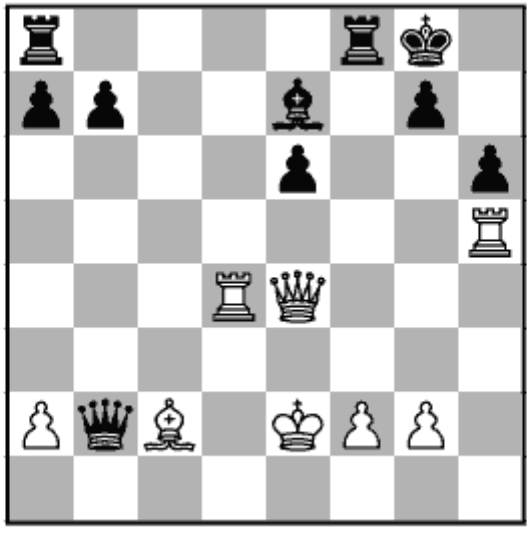
answer



Puzzle 38: Black to play

At first glance the position looks double-edged, but Black has a powerful idea.

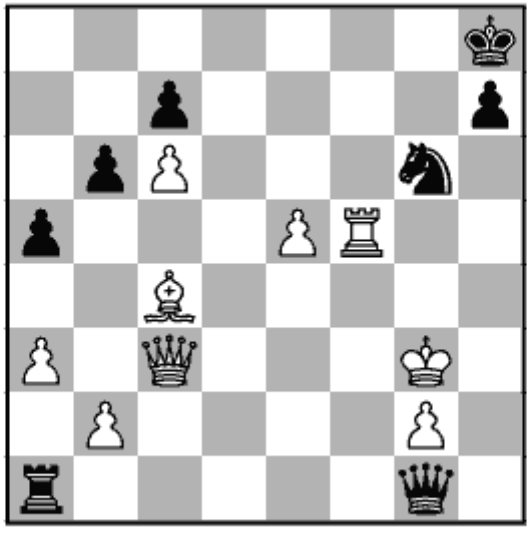
answer



Puzzle 39: Black to play

How does Black parry the threats while keeping his extra material?

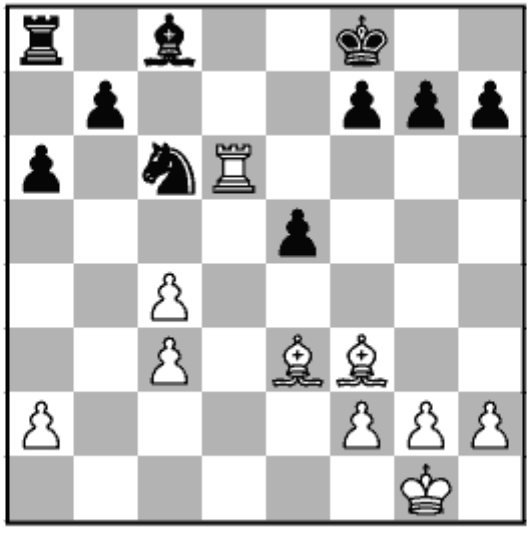
answer



Puzzle 40: Black to play

41 e6+ is threatened. What should Black do?

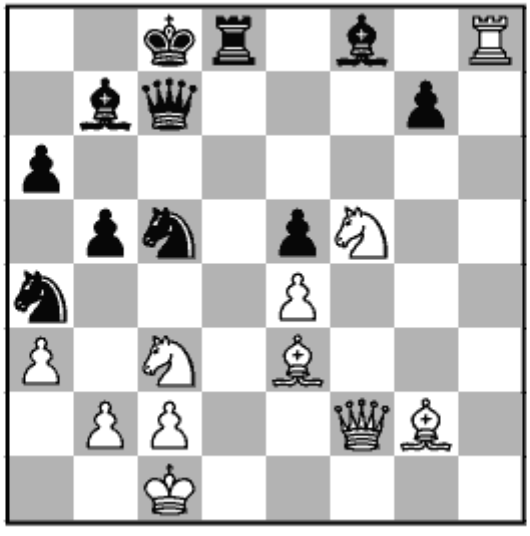
answer



Puzzle 41: White to play

White needs to get the most out of his powerful bishops.

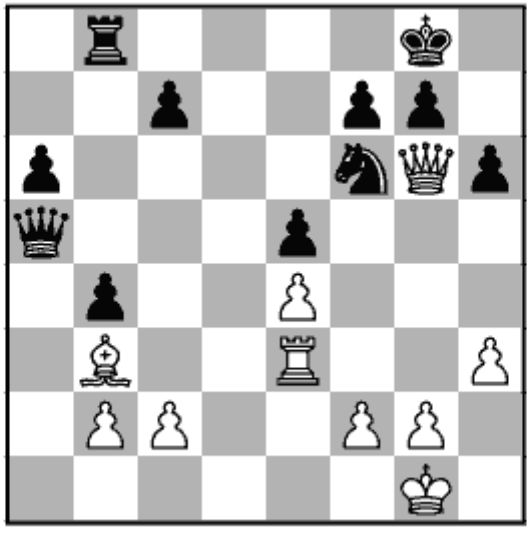
answer



Puzzle 42: White to play

White quickly won the game. What did he play?

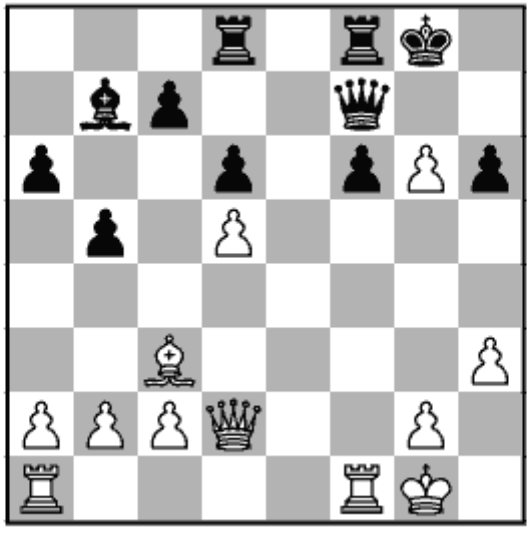
answer



Puzzle 43: Black to play

All the white pieces are targeting the black king. How can he defend?

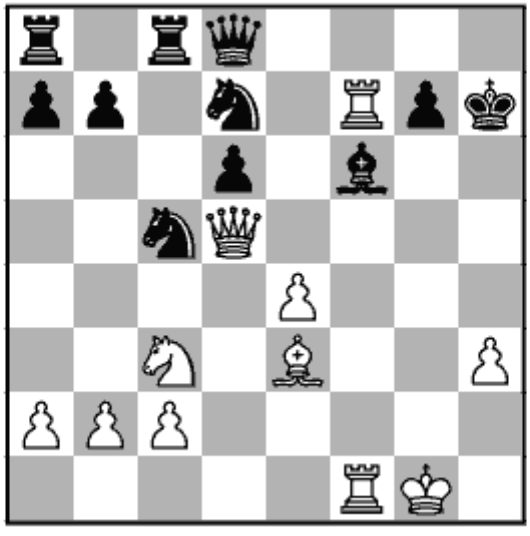
answer



Puzzle 44: Black to play

Black must take one of the white pawns. But which one?

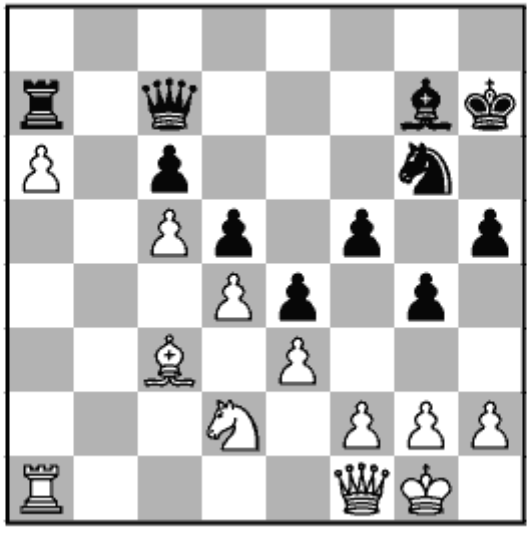
answer



Puzzle 45: Black to play

Black parried White's threats and obtained a won game. How?

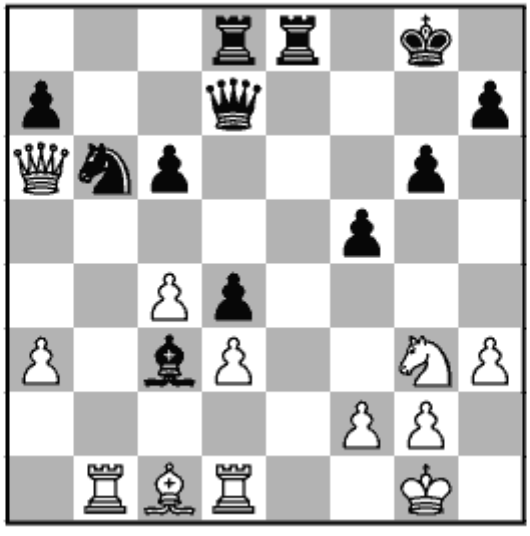
answer



Puzzle 46: Black to play

White's pawn on a6 looks formidable. How does Black stop it from running rampant?

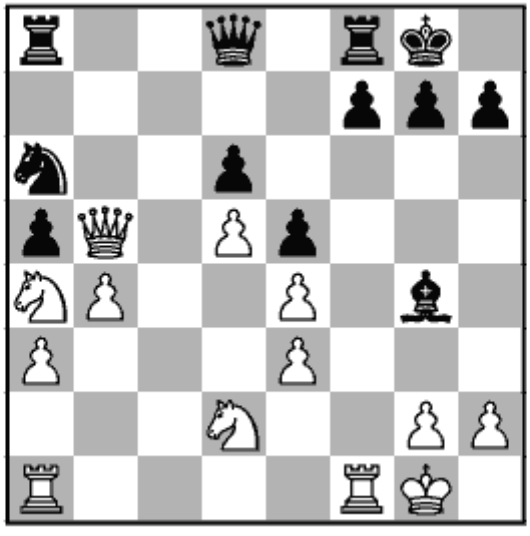
answer



Puzzle 47: Black to play

Can Black play for a win here?

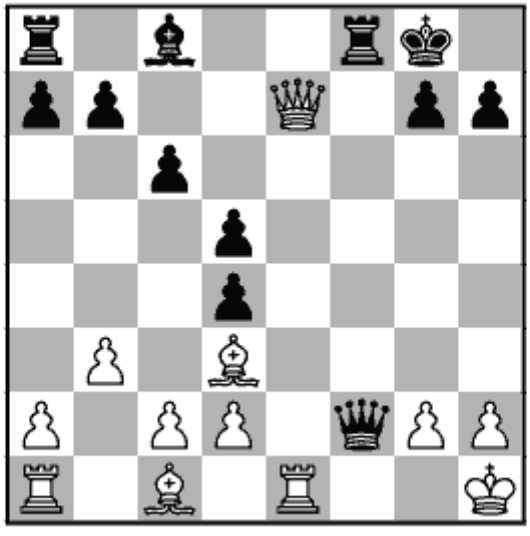
answer



Puzzle 48: Black to play

White has just captured a pawn on b5. How did Black punish him for this move?

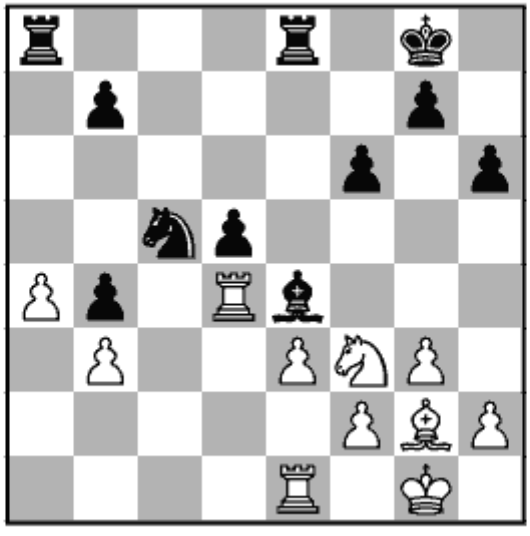
answer



Puzzle 49: Black to play

Black is a bishop down. Can he save the game?

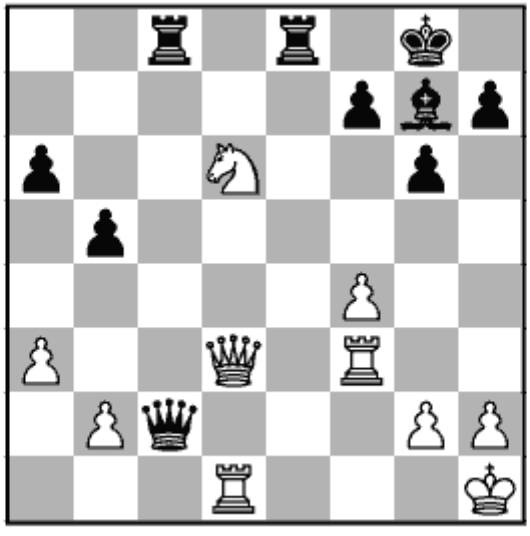
answer



Puzzle 50: White to play

The b3-pawn is under attack. How should White react?

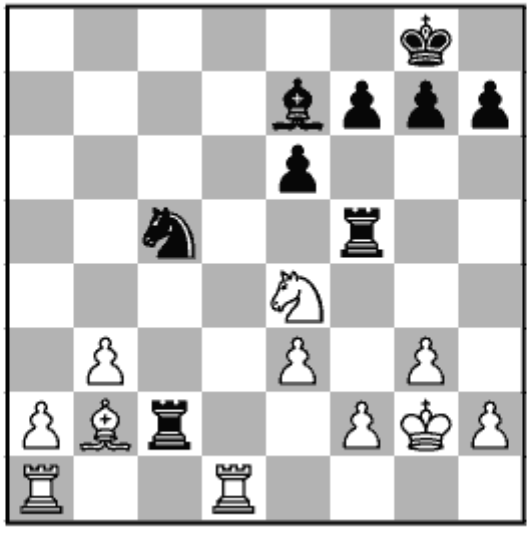
answer



Puzzle 51: Black to play

Both Black's rooks are threatened. What can be done about that?

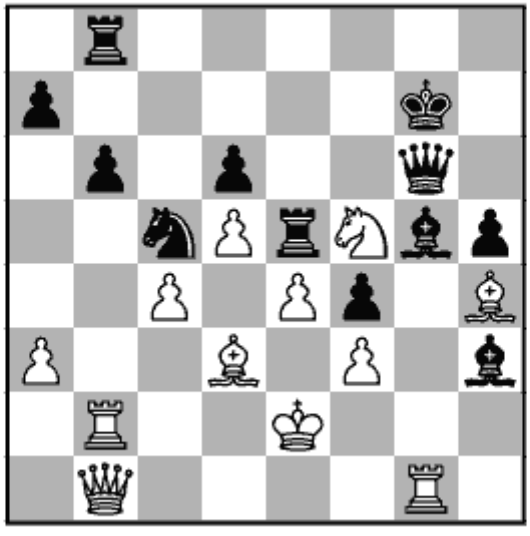
answer



Puzzle 52: White to play

White has two pieces under attack. How can he save them?

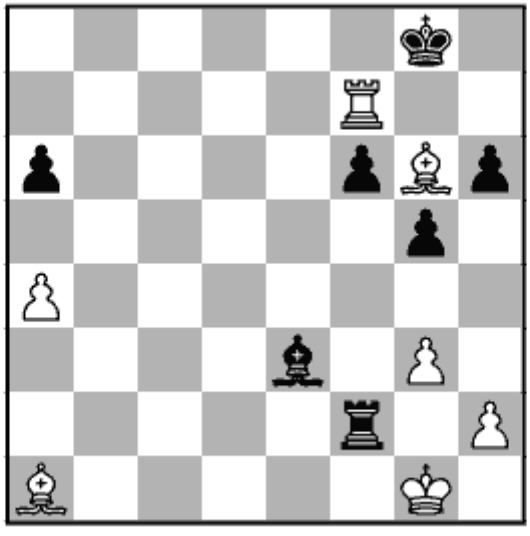
answer



Puzzle 53: Black to play

White has just played 39 Nd4-f5+. How should Black react?

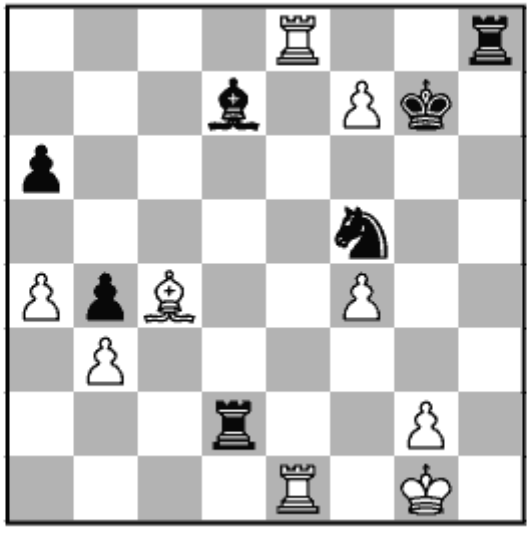
answer



Puzzle 54: White to play

Black is threatening a discovered check with his rook. What should White play?

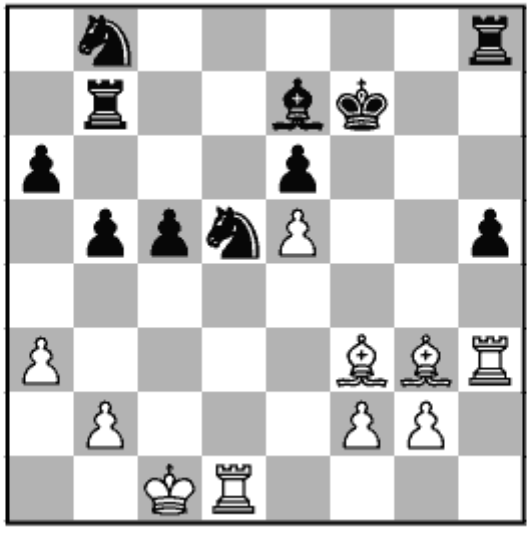
answer



Puzzle 55: Black to play

What can Black do about the rook on e8 and the deadly threats it is creating?

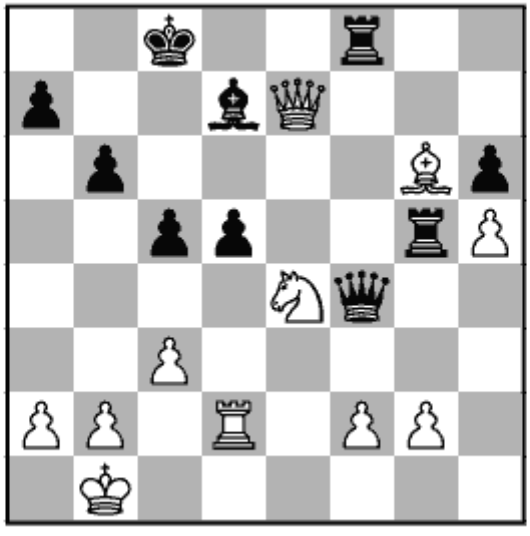
answer



Puzzle 56: White to play

White has sacrificed a piece to get to this position. What did he have in mind?

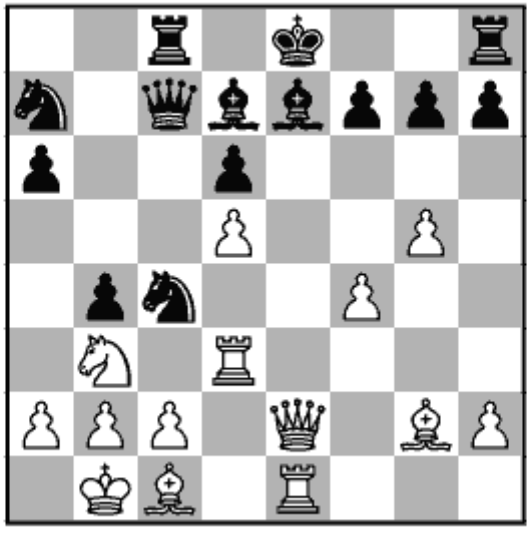
answer



Puzzle 57: Black to play

White has just played 31 Ng3-e4. Why was that not a good decision?

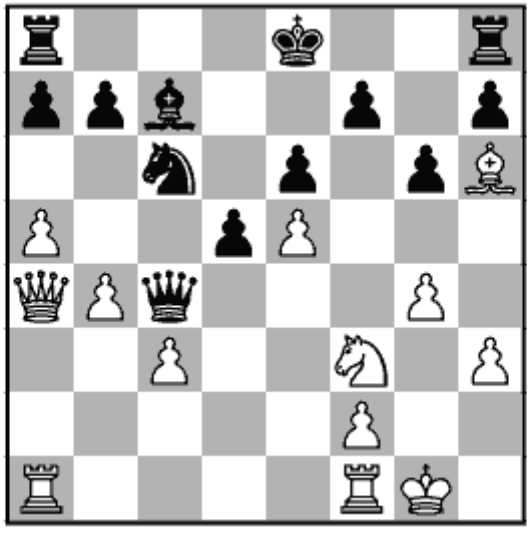
answer



Puzzle 58: Black to play

White has sacrificed a piece. How should Black defend?

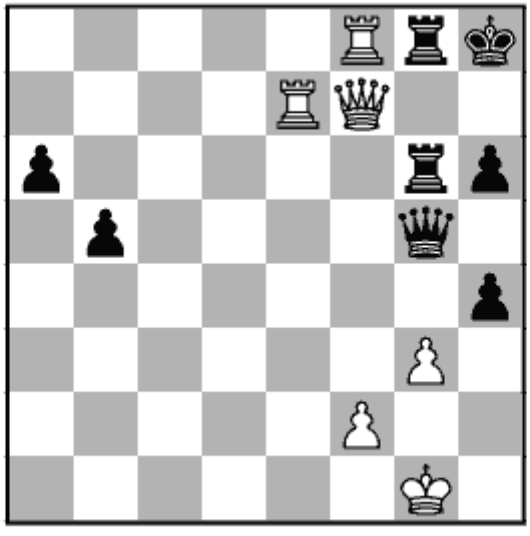
answer



Puzzle 59: White to play

Black is behind in development. How does White continue his attack?

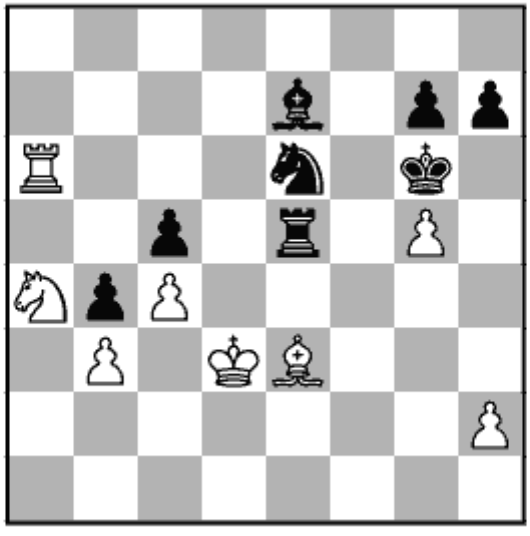
answer



Puzzle 60: Black to play

Mate is threatened. How should Black defend?

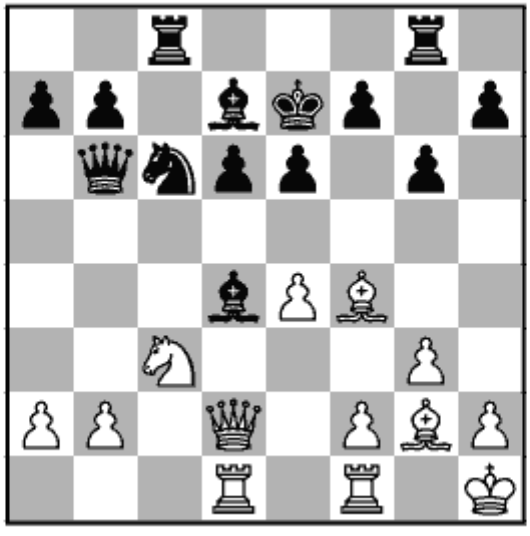
answer



Puzzle 61: White to play

White can win, but must carefully sidestep some false paths.

answer



Puzzle 62: White to play

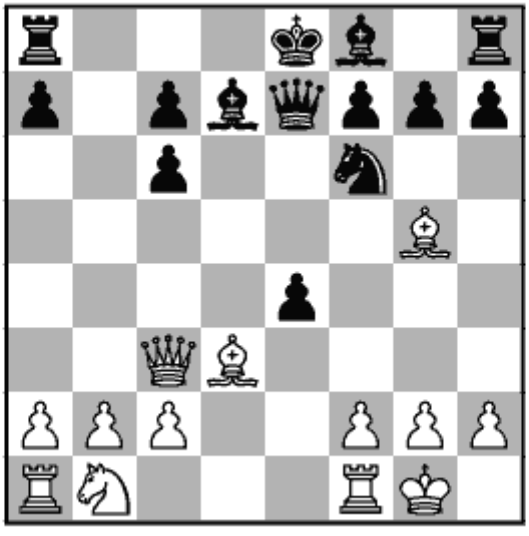
How can White drive home his advantage?

answer

Puzzle 63: White to play

Black has not yet developed all his pieces. How should White take advantage?

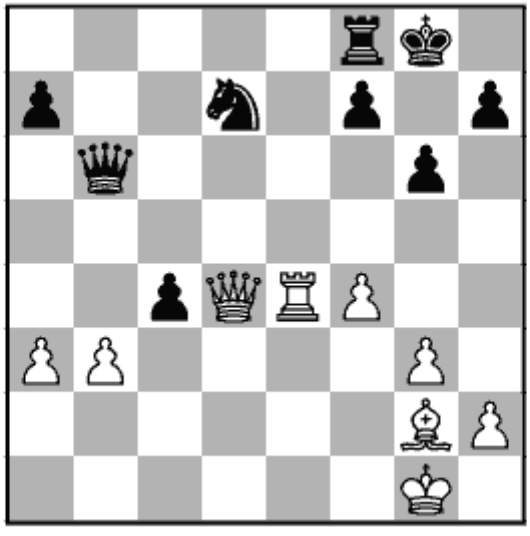
answer



Puzzle 64: Black to play

Can Black take the bishop on d3?

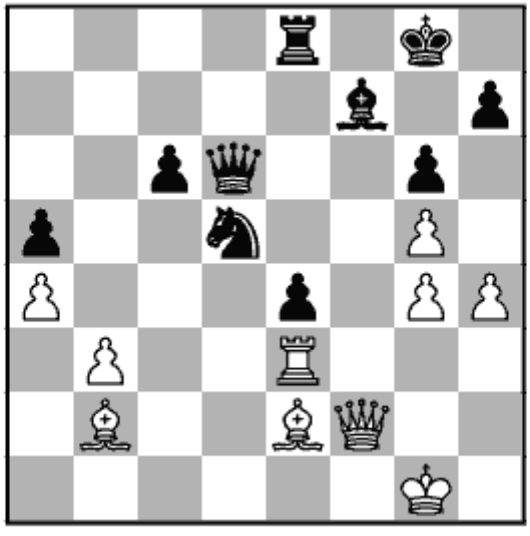
answer



Puzzle 65: Black to play

Black found a way to win the game. Can you?

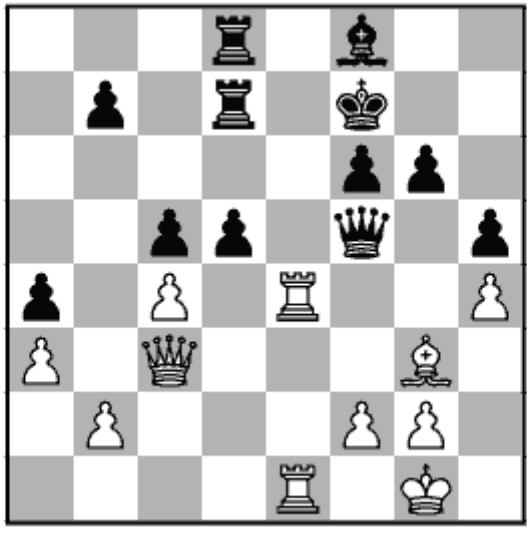
answer



Puzzle 66: White to play

Black has just attacked the rook. How should White react?

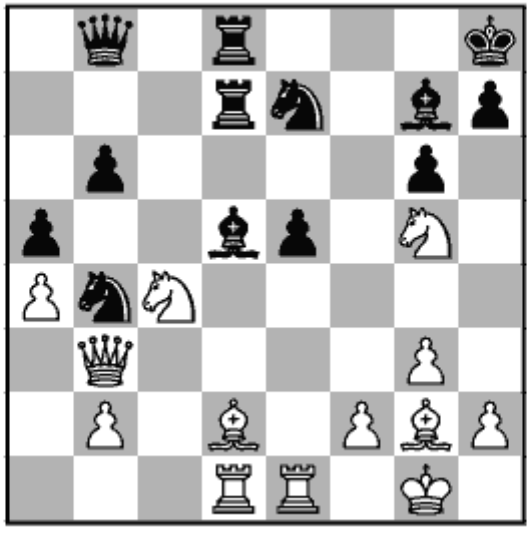
answer



Puzzle 67: White to play

White can take on d5 or move his rook. Which is better?

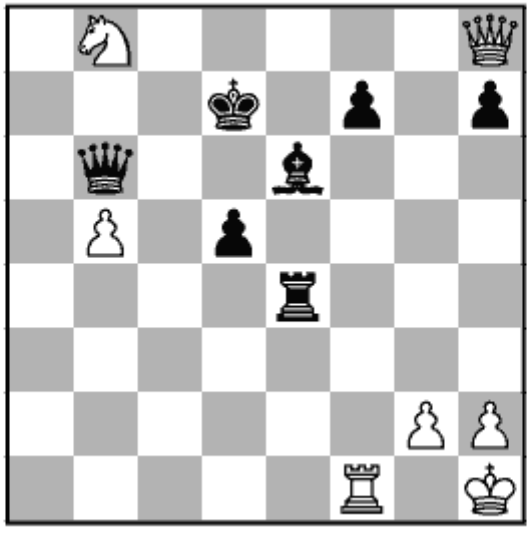
answer



Puzzle 68: Black to play

Black appears to be in a quandary. How might he defend?

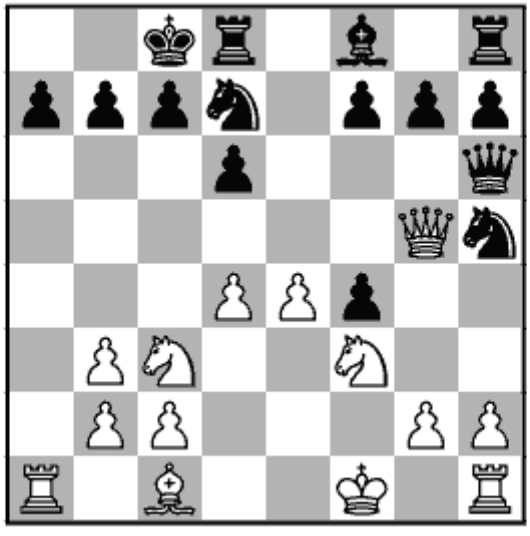
answer



Puzzle 69: Black to play

Where should Black put his king?

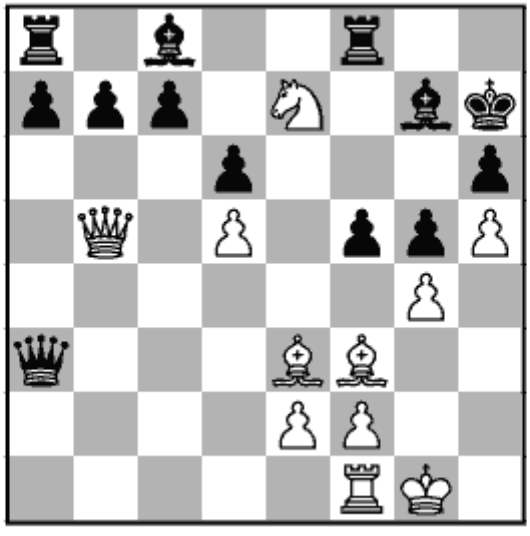
answer



Puzzle 70: Black to play

Black now played 12…Ng3+. Was this a good decision?

answer

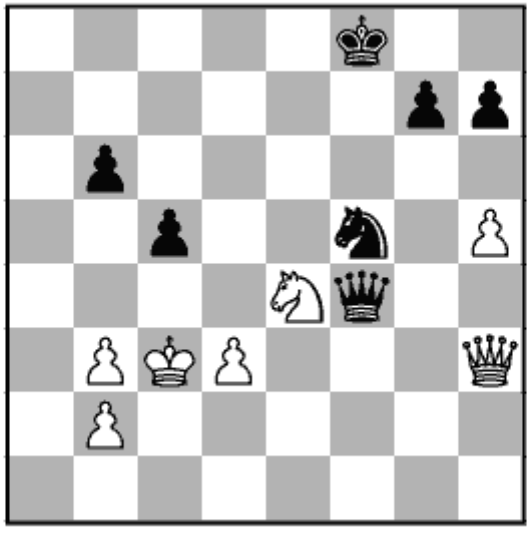


Puzzle 71: White to play

An exchange and two pawns down, White must find a way to develop his initiative.

answer

Solutions for Chapter 1



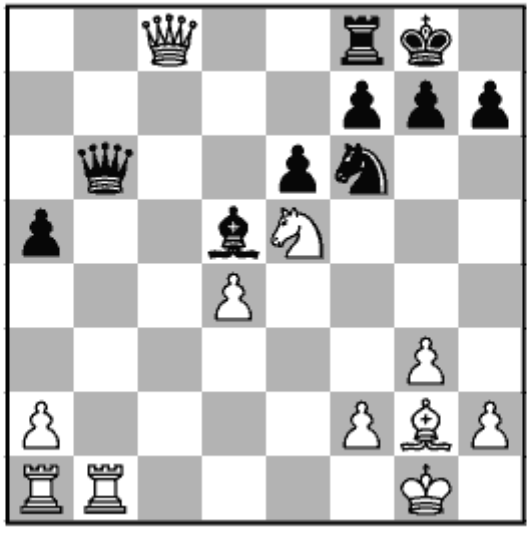
Solution 1: Black to play

Bhasima – Mohota

Mumbai 2018/19

Thanks to the black pawn on c5, the white king has no flight-squares after **36…Qc1# (0-1)**.

back



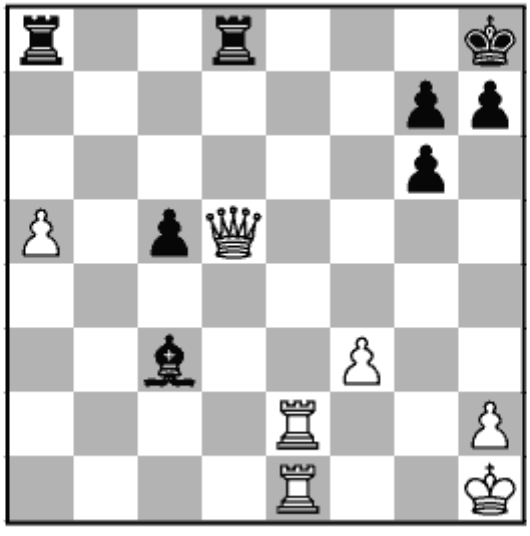
Solution 2: Black to play

Vantika – Akash

Mumbai 2018/19

25…Qxb1+! (otherwise Black remains a rook down, as the double attack with 25…Qxd4? is easily brushed aside with the simple 26 Qc7, while White can also play for mate by 26 Rb8!? Qxa1+ 27 Bf1) **26 Rxb1 Rxc8** with a roughly equal position.

back



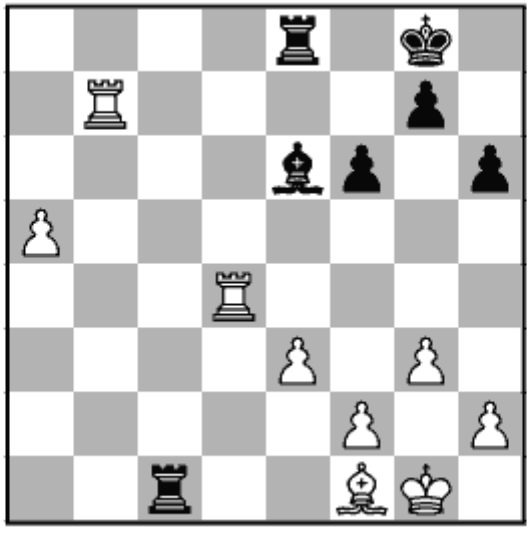
Solution 3: Black to play

Hillarp Persson – Karthikeyan

Stockholm 2018/19

35…Bxe1! (not 35…Rxd5? 36 Re8+, mating) **36 Qxc5 Bxa5** with a roughly equal position.

back



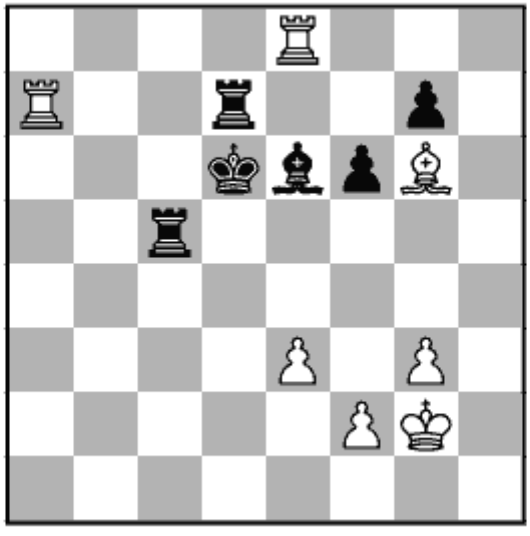
Solution 4: Black to play

Åkesson – M.Friedland (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

However good your position is, you always need to be careful about any threat to your king, as it could cost you the game on the spot. After **34…Bh3! –+** (not 34…Bc8? 35 Rdd7 =) White has no way to avoid mate.

back



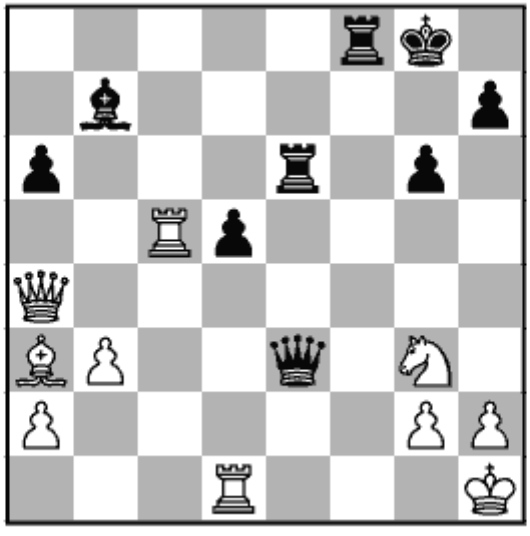
Solution 5: White to play

Åkesson – M.Friedland (based on)

Stockholm 2018/19

After **1 Ra6+!** Black's bishop is lost. For example, **1…Rc6 2 Rxc6+ Kxc6 3 Rxe6+** +–.

back



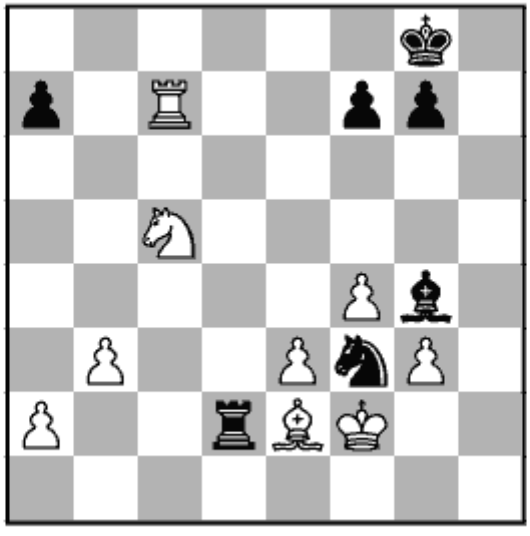
Solution 6: Black to play

K.Chan – Krishna Teja (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

White's back rank is too weak: **30…Qe1+! 31 Rxe1 Rxe1+ 32 Nf1 Rfxf1#**.

back



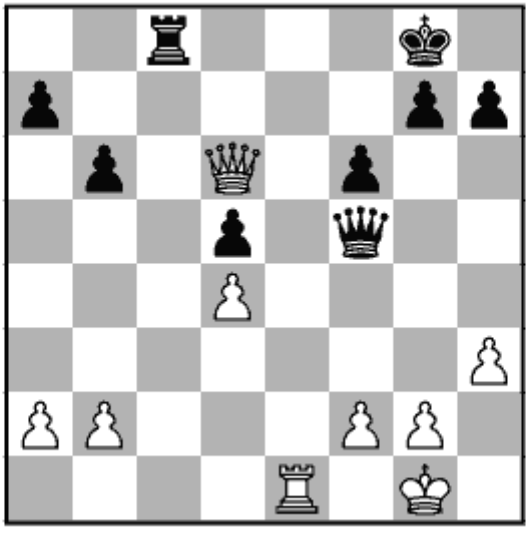
Solution 7: Black to play

Lu Miaoyi – D.Stones (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

To do so, Black must unleash the power of the bishop on g4, and the knight has only one safe square to move to: **34…Nh2** –+ and White can resign. Instead 34…Rxa2? 35 Nd3 leads to a roughly equal position.

back



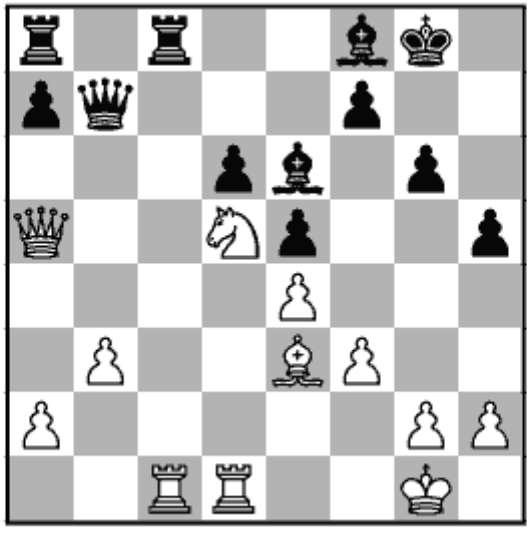
Solution 8: White to play

K.Holm – P.Roy (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

The queen on f5 holds together Black's position, but it can be driven away. After **29 g4! +–** Black's game is hopeless. After 29…Qf3? 30 Qe6+ +– Black loses his rook and is mated, but even **29…Qc2 30 Qxd5+** gives White a huge advantage, and he should win with good play.

back



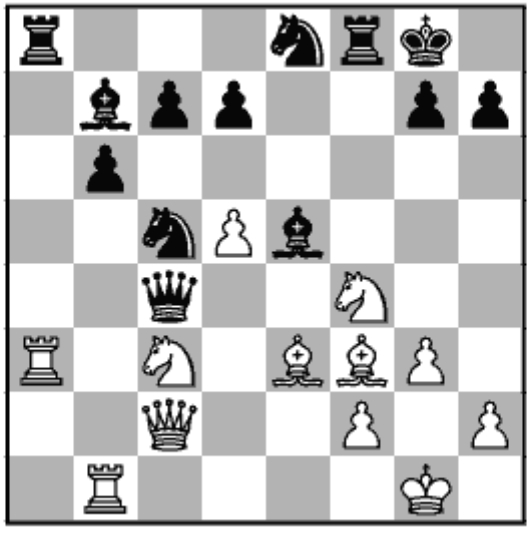
Solution 9: White to play

Slugin – L.Carlsson

Stockholm 2018/19

By attacking the rook on a8, White forces it to abandon the a7-pawn. After **24 Nc7! Rab8** (as played in the game) White's best option is **25 Bxa7 +–**, with a decisive advantage. Black can fight on with 25…Qb4 or 25…Bh6, but there is no real hope.

back



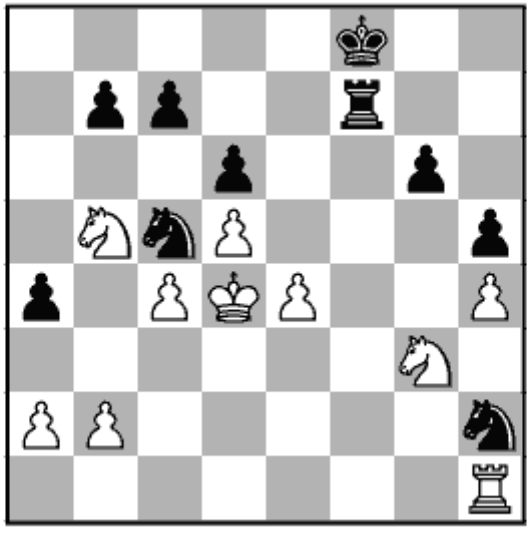
Solution 10: White to play

I.Damianou – Cherepov

Stockholm 2018/19

Only **22 Be2!** is good; other moves leave White worse. After **22…Rxa3 23 Bxc4 Rxc3 24 Qe2** White has a large advantage.

back



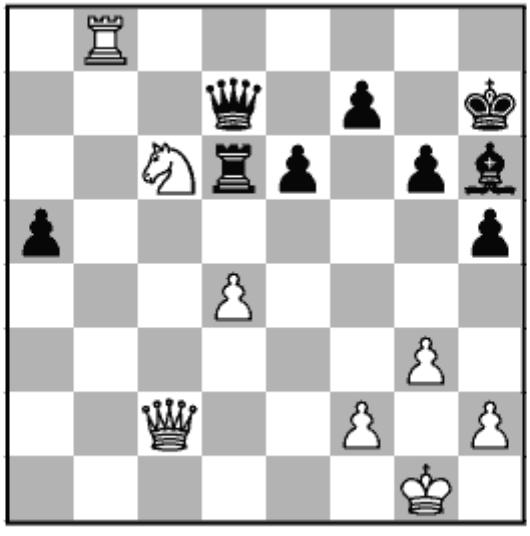
Solution 11: Black to play

Nesterov – Heberla

Stockholm 2018/19

After **38…Rf3!** White resigned as the only way to prevent mate on d3 is **39 Rd1**, which drops the knight: **39…Rxg3 –+**.

back



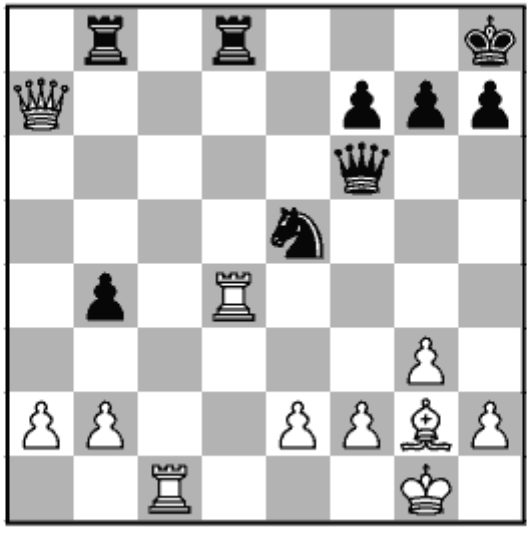
Solution 12: White to play

Priyanka – Erenberg

Stockholm 2018/19

37 Ne5! Qa7 (Black can avoid being mated by 37…Qe7 38 Qc8 Bf8, but it is hopeless as it costs him a piece) **38 Qc8 Bg7 39 Qg8+ 1-0**. Black resigned as his queen will be lost.

back



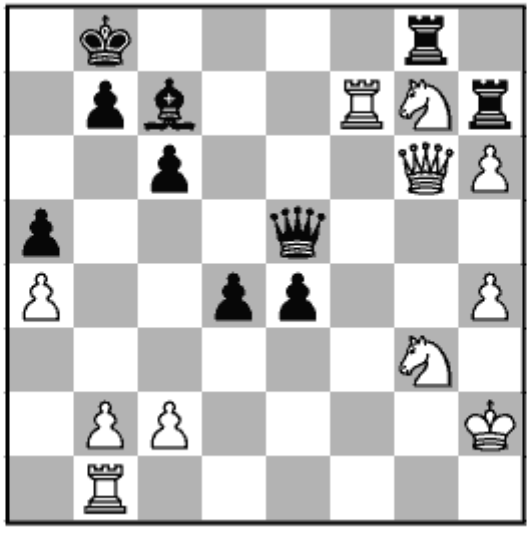
Solution 13: Black to play

Jiang Qinyu – Guan Runpei (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

Black can't take on d4 immediately, but he can open the way for his queen by **23…Nf3+! 24 Bxf3 Qxd4 25 Qxf7** (no better is 25 Qxd4 Rxd4) **25…Qxb2** with a roughly equal position.

back



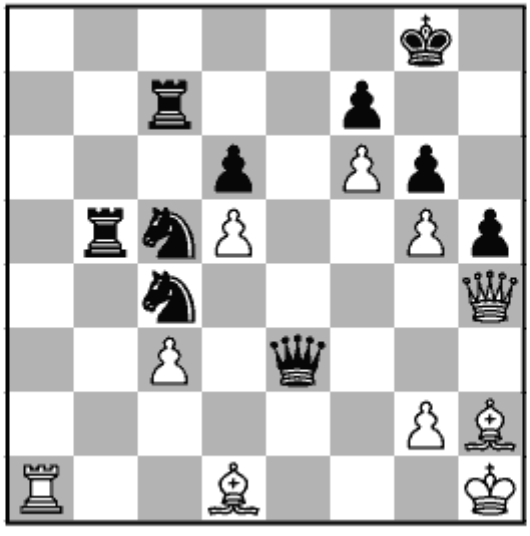
Solution 14: Black to play

A.Dimitrova – Gorshtein

Stockholm 2018/19

34…Rxh6! 35 Qg4 (35 Qxh6 Qxg3+ 36 Kh1 Qh2#) **35…Rh7** and White's position is completely hopeless as both knights are lost.

back



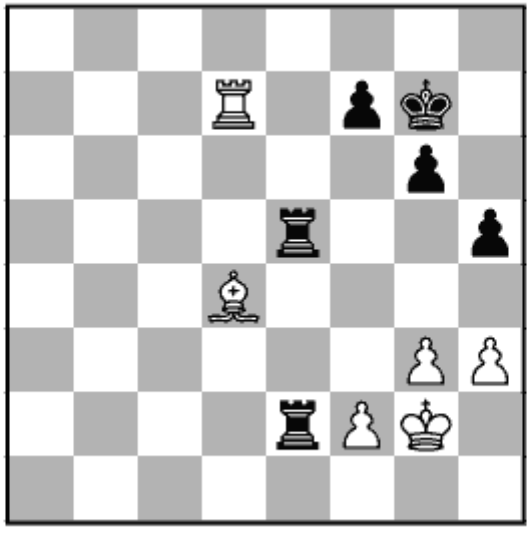
Solution 15: White to play

Zou Chen – Pantzar (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

39 Ra8+ Kh7 40 Bxh5! +– with mate in a few moves. **40… Rb1+** doesn't help in view of **41 Bd1#**.

back

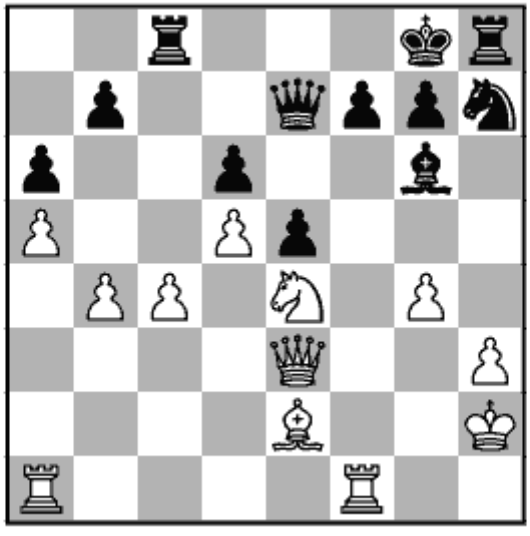


Solution 16: White to play

Training position

He must attack the rook right away before Black moves his king from g7: **1 Re7!** (there are multiple pins at work in fact, as 1 Rd5? f6 = offers White nothing since he has abandoned the pin on the f7-pawn, and White himself can't play f4 yet because this pawn is also pinned) **1…Kf6 2 Rxe5 Rxe5 3 f4** +– and White will be a piece up.

back



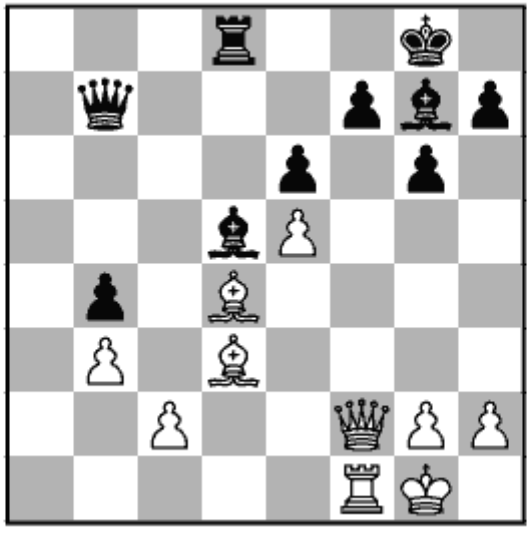
Solution 17: Black to play

Nettleton – V.Petrov

Hastings 2018/19

By powerfully activating the h7-knight. He must first eliminate White's knight on e4: **31…Bxe4! 32 Qxe4 Ng5 –+** and the black rook will invade on h3 with decisive effect. In the game Black soon won after **33 Qf5 Rxh3+ 34 Kg2 Re8**.

back



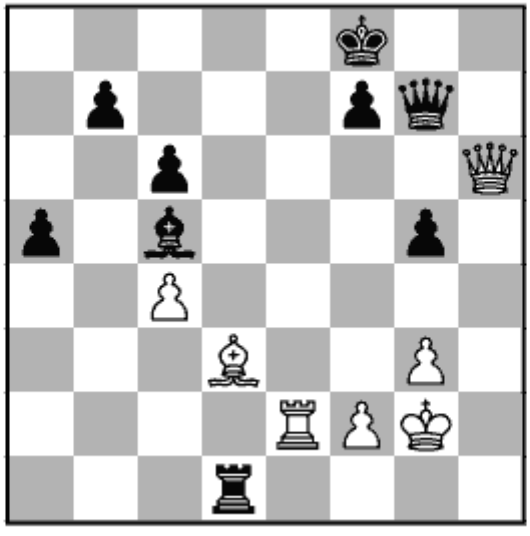
Solution 18: Black to play

Arya – Konguvel

Mumbai 2018/19

After **25…Bxg2! 26 Qxg2** (or 26 Ra1 {as played in the game} 26…Bf3 –+) **26…Qxg2+ 27 Kxg2 Rxd4 –+** White is a pawn down and will soon lose another one.

back



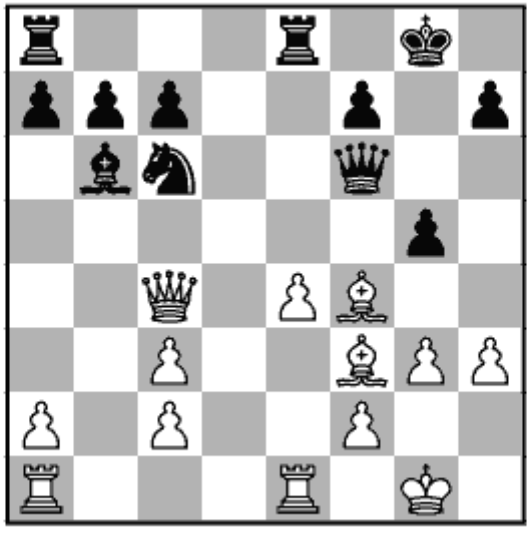
Solution 19: White to play

Harutjunyan – Kravtsiv (variation)

Visakhapatnam 2012

A deflection of the black king wins the queen: **40 Re8+! Kxe8 41 Qxg7** with a decisive advantage.

back



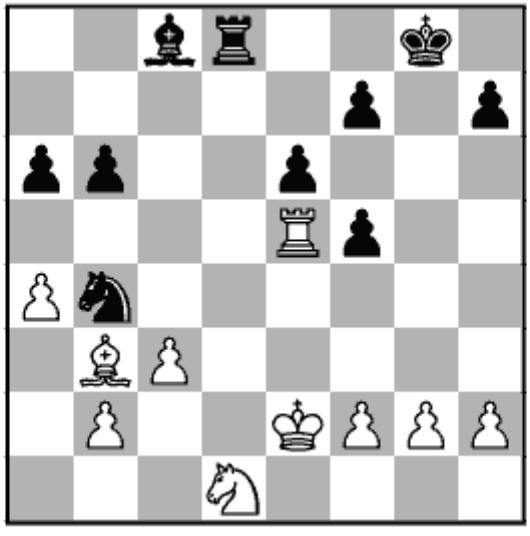
Solution 20: White to play

Harutjunyan – Kravtsiv

Visakhapatnam 2012

17 e5! does the trick. Black must either exchange his knight or remove his queen from the f-file: **17…Nxe5** (slightly better is 17…Qg7!? 18 Bd2 Nxe5 19 Qe2 =+) **18 Rxe5** (18 Bxe5 =) **18…Rxe5 19 Bxe5** with a roughly equal position.

back



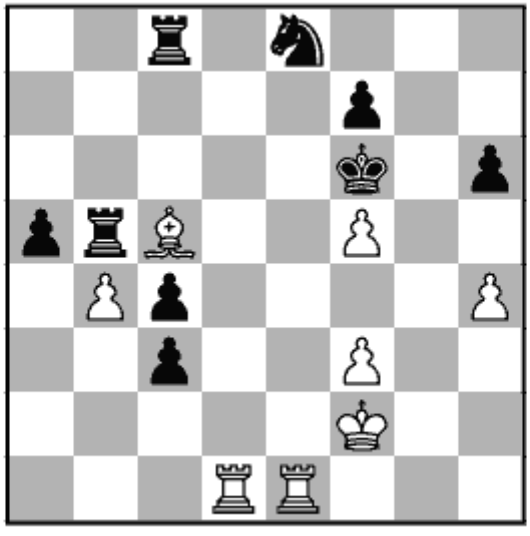
Solution 21: Black to play

Mohammad Fahad – Gajek

Mumbai 2018/19

Black wins the white bishop: **24…Nd3!** (24…Nc6? 25 Re3 =) **25 Re3 Nc1+ 0-1**.

back



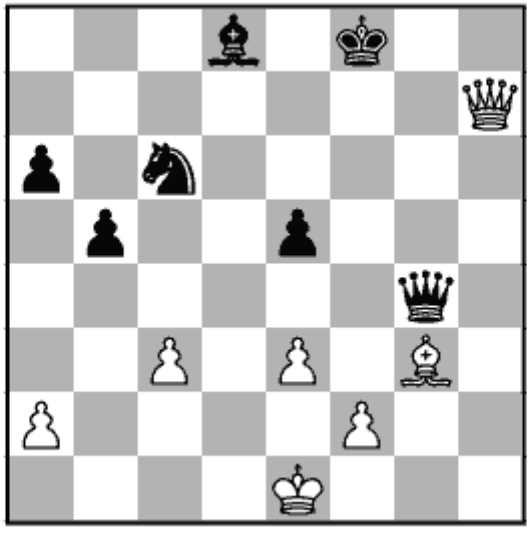
Solution 22: White to play

Piasetski – Polavaram (based on)

Burlingame 2019

38 Rd5! (the mate threat is decisive as it forces Black to give up an exchange) **38…Rcxc5** (38…Rbxc5 39 Rxc5 Rxc5 40 bxc5 +–; 38…Kg7 39 Bd4+ +–) **39 Rxc5 Rxb4 40 Rxe8 c2 41 Re1** +–.

back



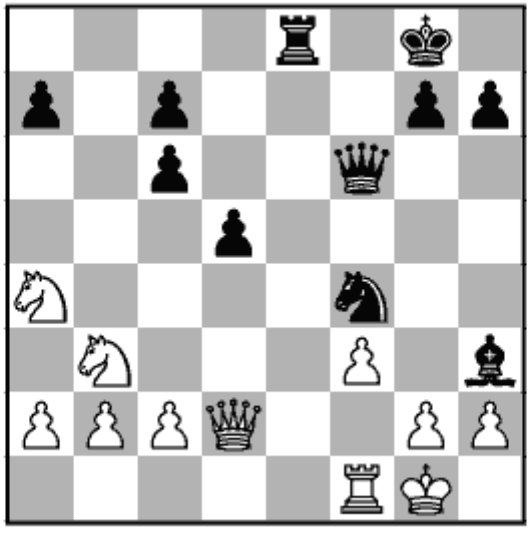
Solution 23: White to play

Eames – Comellas (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

After **29 Qh6+! Kf7 30 Qxc6 +/–** White has won back the knight and has good winning chances.

back



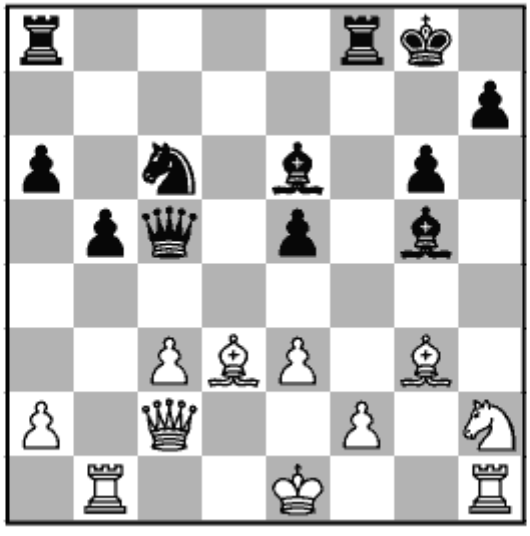
Solution 24: White to play

Lavendelis – Kravtsiv

Al Ain tt 2012

Taking the bishop leads to mate or loss of the queen: 21 gxh3? Re2 (or 21…Qg6+ 22 Kh1 Re2 –+) 22 Qd1 Qg6+ 23 Kh1 Qg2#. So White was right to prefer **21 Re1! Rxe1+ 22 Qxe1** with a roughly equal position.

back



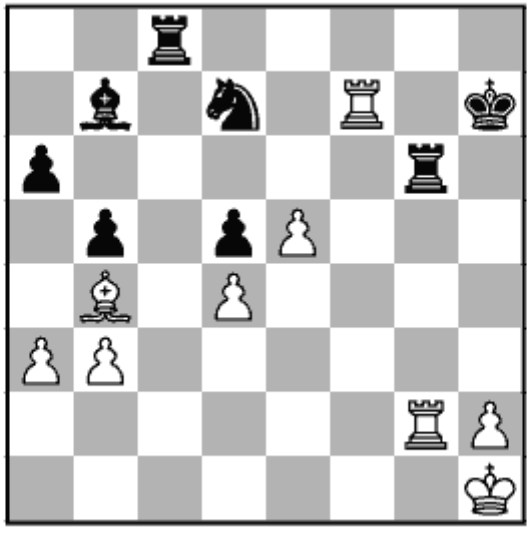
Solution 25: White to play

Eames – Comellas (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

With **20 Bxg6!** White regains his missing pawn and also weakens the black king's defences. After **20…Ra7** (20… hxg6? 21 Qxg6+ Kh8 22 Ng4+ +–) **21 Be4** the game is unclear.

back



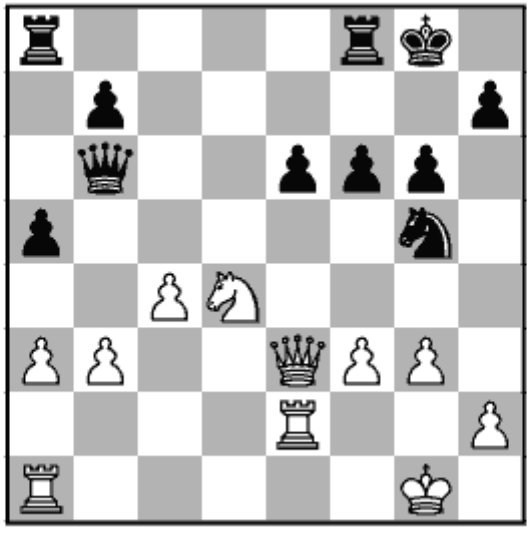
Solution 26: Black to play

Ratnesan – Sumit (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

33…Kg8! (33…Kh8? 34 Rxg6 +–; 33…Kh6? 34 Bd2+ Kh5 35 Rh7+ +–) **34 Rxg6+** (34 Rxd7? Rc1+ 35 Be1 Rxe1+ 36 Rg1 Rexg1#) **34…Kxf7** and Black is no worse.

back



Solution 27: Black to play

A.Katz – Banik (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black can win the knight using a fork: **27…Qxd4!** (not 27… e5? 28 Nb5 Nxf3+ 29 Kf2 =+, when Black's advantage is small) **28 Qxd4 Nxf3+ 29 Kf2 Nxd4 –+**.

back

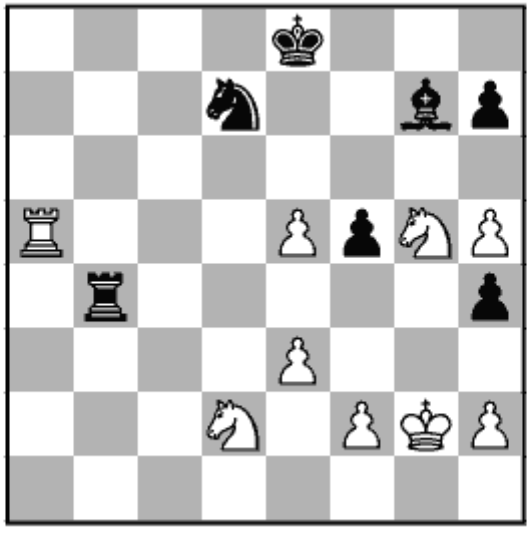
Solution 28: White to play

Gagare – Kravtsiv (variation)

Nagpur 2012

22 Nxe5! (Black is OK after 22 Bxe5? Qc6) **22…Bb5 23 Ng6** +– with an easy win.

back



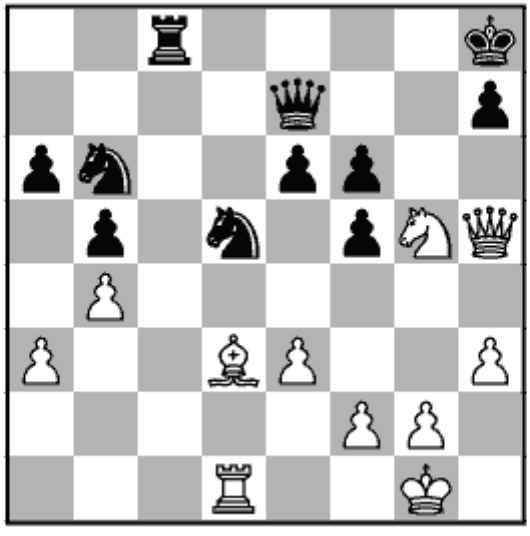
Solution 29: Black to play

T.Ravi – P.Patil

Mumbai 2018/19

33…Rg4+! (Black wins the white knight even if it means the rook ends up in a tight spot; he needs to do something dramatic since after 33…Nxe5? 34 Nxh7 +– Black is still two pawns down and has no chance of saving the game) **34 Kh3 Rxg5 35 f4** (weaker is 35 Kxh4?! Rg2 =+, while 35 Nf3 Rxh5 gave Black no problems in the game) **35…Rxh5 36 Ra8+ Ke7 37 Ra7**. Thanks to his powerful pawns, White is still slightly better, but the game should be drawn.

back



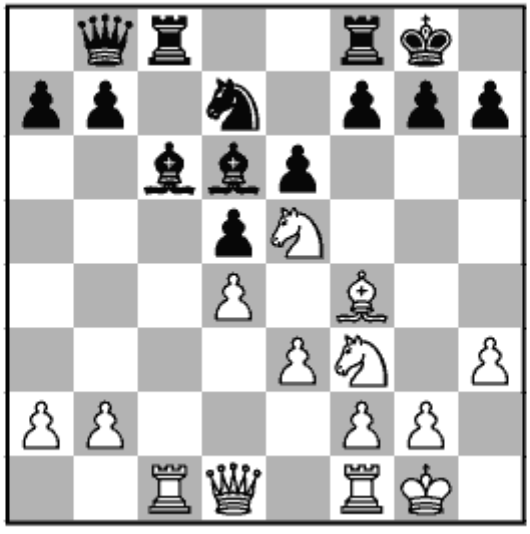
Solution 30: White to play

Ternault – S.Wagner

Stockholm 2018/19

32 Nxe6! Qxe6 (32…Nc3 loses to 33 Nf4 +–, while after 32… Nxe3?! 33 fxe3 Qxe6 34 Bxf5 Qxe3+ 35 Kh1 +–, as played in the game, it is time for Black to resign) **33 Bxf5 Qg8 34 Bxc8** +–. Either recapture on c8 leaves the d5-knight inadequately defended, so White makes a decisive material gain.

back



Solution 31: White to play

Li Kam – Guan Runpei

Tianjin 2018/19

15 Rxc6! +– wins material. For example: **15…Nxe5** (even worse is 15…Rxc6 16 Nxd7 +–) **16 dxe5 bxc6** (after 16… Rxc6 17 exd6 +– White has two pieces for a rook as well as a strong passed pawn on d6) **17 exd6 Qxb2** gives White a decisive advantage. The simplest win is then **18 d7 Rcd8 19 Bd6** +–.

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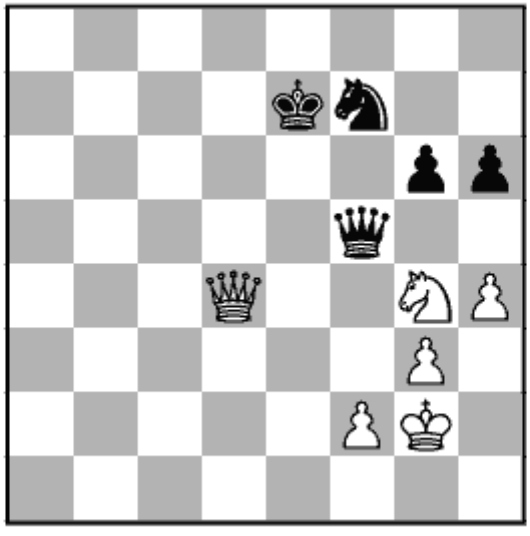


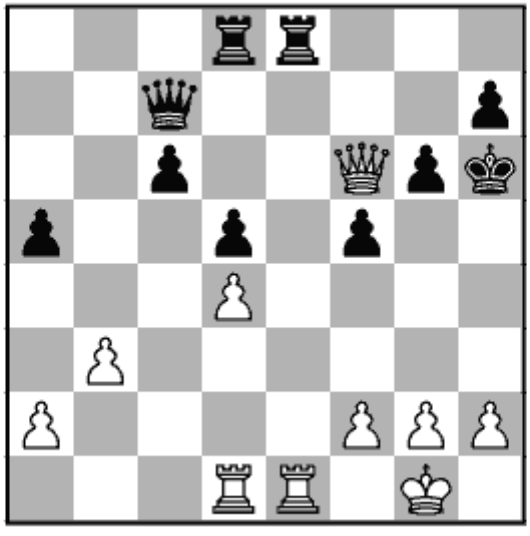
Solution 32: White to play

J.Anderson – C.Graham

Hastings 2018/19

White picks up a second pawn thanks to a queen fork: **59 Nxh6!** (59 Qb4+?! Ke8 +/–) **59…Nxh6 60 Qe3+ +–** and with two extra pawns, White should win easily.

back



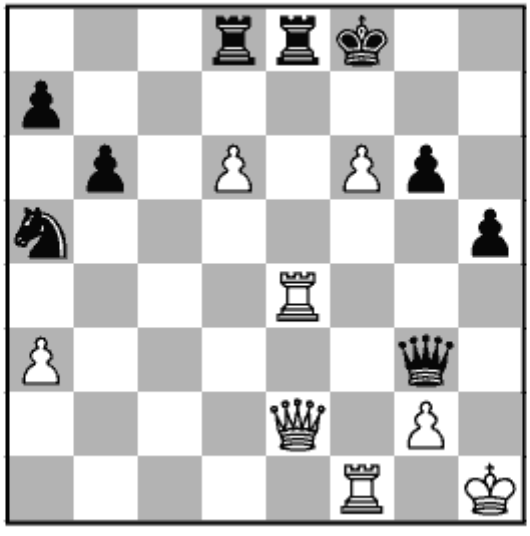
Solution 33: White to play

Ji.Song – Kearsley (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

First of all White must block the e-file so that the other rook can swing over to the h-file: **28 Re5! Rxe5** (28…Qd7 29 Rd3 +–; 28…Rf8 29 Qh4+ Kg7 30 Re7+ +–) **29 dxe5** and there's no defence against the rook coming to h3: **29…Re8 30 Rd3** +–.

back



Solution 34: White to play

Malek – Ornstein (based on)

Stockholm 2018/19

34 Rxe8+ (after 34 Re7? Qh4+ 35 Kg1 Qd4+ Black is no worse) **34…Rxe8 35 Qe7+!! Rxe7 36 fxe7++ Kg7** (36…Ke8 37 Rf8+ +–) **37 e8Q** and White wins. Black has a few checks but they don't change anything: **37…Qh4+ 38 Kg1 Qd4+ 39 Rf2 Qd1+ 40 Kh2** +–.

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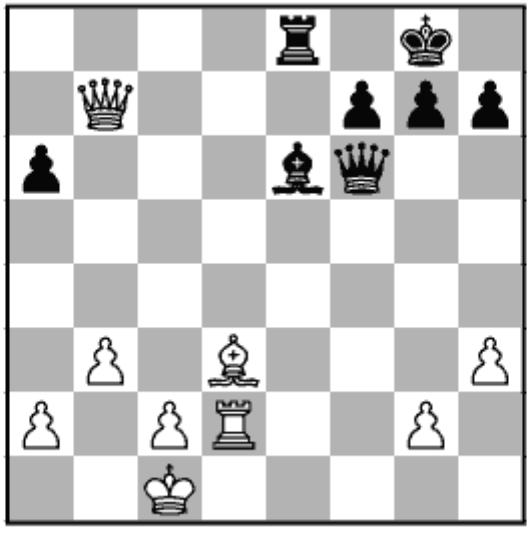

Solution 35: White to play

Ertan – Vignesh

Stockholm 2018/19

28 Re2! (after 28 Kb1? Bc8! 29 Re2 Qf1+ 30 Kb2 Qxe2 31 Qxc8 Black has a very playable position, while 28 Rd1? Qa1+ 29 Kd2 Qe5 gives Black compensation thanks to White's exposed king; e.g., 30 Qxa6 Qg5+ 31 Kc3 Qf6+! 32 Kb4 Qe7+ 33 Kc3 Qf6+ =) **28…Qa1+** (Black's best hope is to trade a-pawns; 28…a5 29 Qb5 Ra8 30 Qe5 +– and 28…Qf1+ 29 Kb2 Qf6+ 30 c3 +– offer little hope, while in the game 28…Rd8 29 Qxa6 left Black with nothing for the pawns) **29 Kd2 Qxa2 30 Qxa6** and with an extra pawn White has excellent winning chances.

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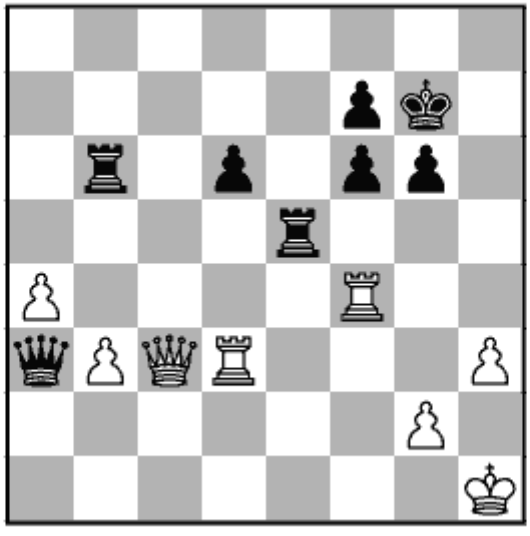


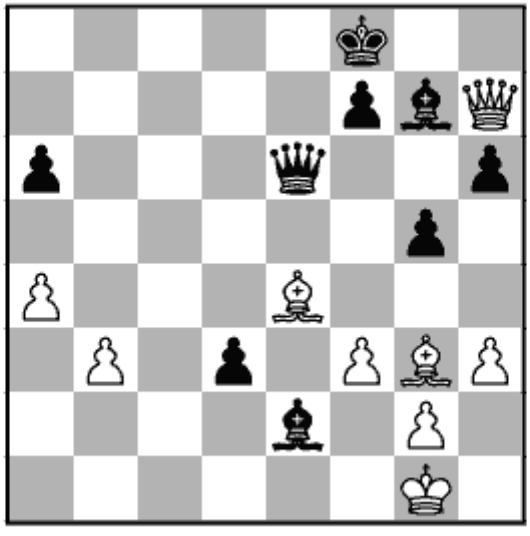
Solution 36: Black to play

Kenneskog – Stabulnieks

Stockholm 2018/19

Black wins a pawn by exploiting White's weak back rank and loose rook on f4: **32…Rxb3! 33 Qxb3 Qc1+ 34 Rd1** (not 34 Qd1? Re1+! {34…Qxf4 –/+} 35 Qxe1 Qxe1+ 36 Kh2 Qe5 37 Rd4 f5! 38 h4 f6 39 Kg1 g5, when White will lose one of his rooks) **34…Qxf4**. With an extra pawn and the enemy king exposed, Black has excellent winning chances.

back



Solution 37: White to play

B.Petersson – F.Polyakov

Stockholm 2018/19

50 Bxd3! (50 Bf2? loses to 50…d2 51 Bc5+ Ke8 –+, while 50 Be1? Qd6 51 Bd2 Be5 –+ is bad for White due to the strong pawn on d3) **50…Qe3+ 51 Bf2 Bxd3** (51…Qxd3? loses to 52 Bc5+ Ke8 53 Qxg7 +–, while White need not fear 51…Qc1+ 52 Kh2 Be5+ 53 Bg3 =) **52 Qxg7+! Kxg7 53 Bxe3 ½-½**. After 53…Bc2 it's a clear draw.

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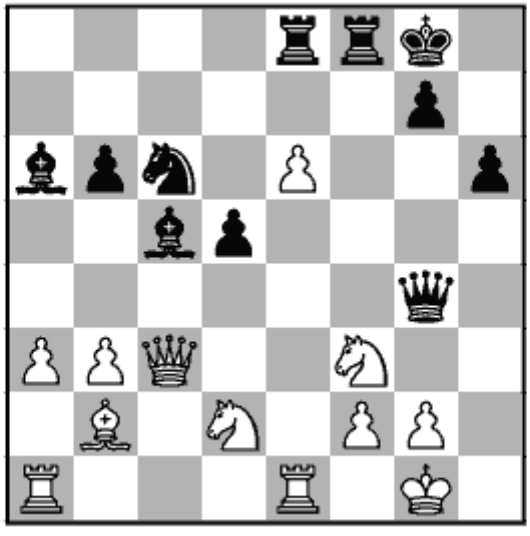

Solution 38: Black to play

Shehzad – Weinzettl (based on)

Stockholm 2018/19

After **22…Rf6!** (not 22…d4? 23 Qc2, when a full-scale battle lies ahead) the rook-lift to g6 gives Black a decisive advantage. For example, **23 Nf1** (23 Nh2 Qh4 24 Kh1 Qxf2 –+) **23…Rg6 24 g3 Qh3** and White's position falls apart like a house of cards: **25 N3d2** (25 b4 Bxf1 –+) **25…Rf8 –+**.

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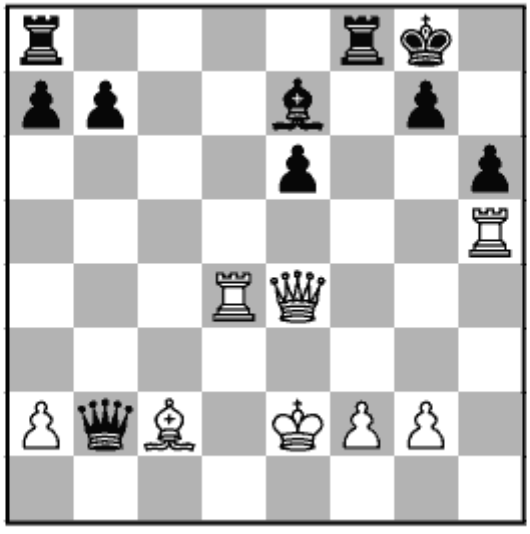

Solution 39: Black to play

Training position

All Black needs to do is securely guard the g6-square: **1… Rf6!** (1…Rf5?! 2 Rxf5 exf5 3 Qe6+ Kf8 4 Qxf5+ =; 1… Rac8?? 2 Qxe6+ Kh8 3 Rxh6+ +–) **2 Rd2** (2 f3 Kf7 –/+) **2… Rd8 3 Rxd8+ Bxd8 –/+** and Black's two extra pawns are likely to prove enough to win.

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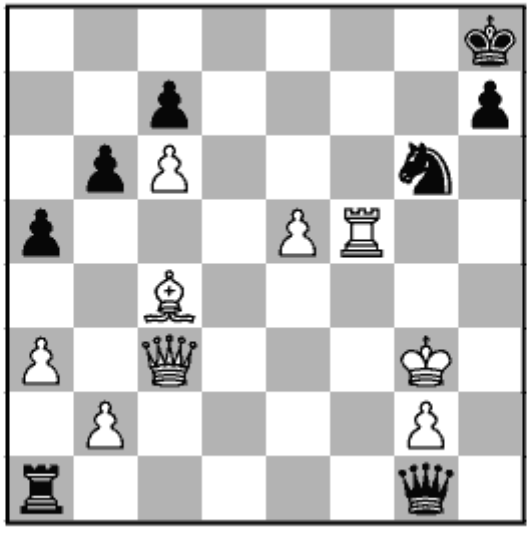

Solution 40: Black to play

Urkedal – Moroni

Stockholm 2018/19

40…Rc1! (an exchange of queens is no use to Black since he is a pawn down: 40…Qe1+? 41 Qxe1 Rxe1 42 e6 +–) **41 Qd2** (41 Qd3?! allows counterplay with 41…Qe1+ or 41…Rd1) **41…Rxc4!** (41…Rd1? loses to 42 Qg5 Qe1+ 43 Kf3 Nh4+ 44 Kg4 +–) and now White can give lots of checks, but the knight on g6 covers enough key squares that there is no mate: **42 Qd8+ Kg7 43 Qf6+** (or 43 Qd7+ Kh6 44 Qd2+ Kg7 45 Qd7+ =) **43…Kh6** (not 43…Kg8? 44 Qf7+ Kh8 45 Qxc4 +–) **44 Qg5+** and a draw was agreed in view of **44…Kg7 45 Qf6+ Kh6** with a repetition of moves.

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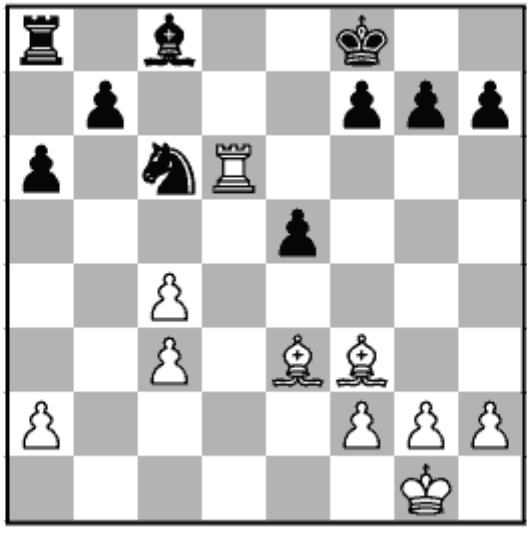


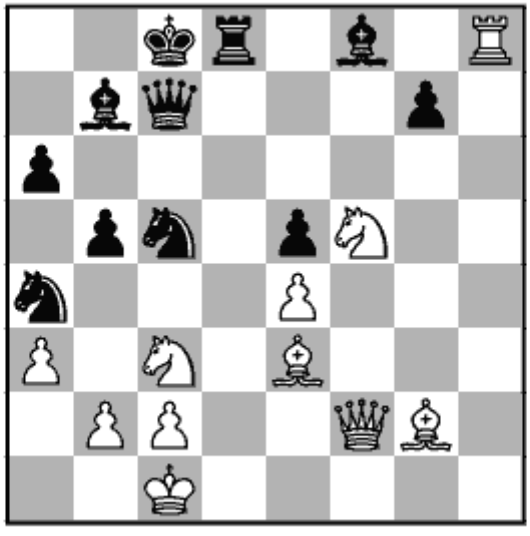
Solution 41: White to play

Sapale – Kucuksari

Stockholm 2018/19

21 Bc5! (after 21 Bxc6? bxc6 22 Rxc6 Be6 the position is close to a draw) **21…Ke8** (21…Kg8 22 Bxc6 +–) **22 Rxc6!** and Black resigned due to **22…bxc6 23 Bxc6+ Bd7 24 Bxa8** +– with an extra bishop.

back



Solution 42: White to play

Libiszewski – Blomqvist

Stockholm 2018/19

24 Bg5! (after 24 Ng3? Be7 White remains better, but Black has real chances to resist) **24…Nxc3** (a desperate-looking move, but there was no escape; 24…Re8 25 Ne7+ +–) **25 Bxd8 Nb3+ 26 cxb3 Ne2++ 27 Kd1 Qc1+ 28 Kxe2 Qc2+ 29 Kf1 1-0**.

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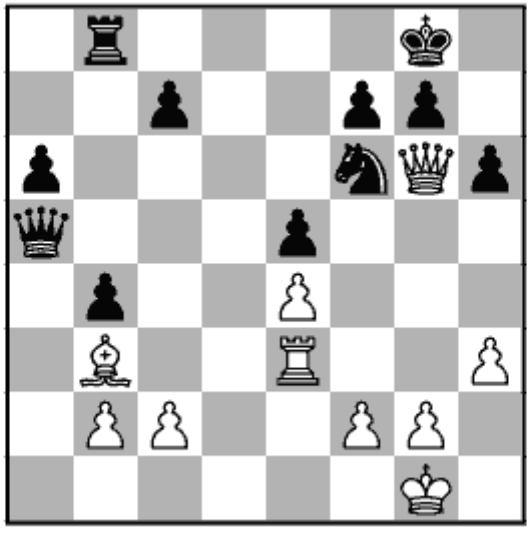

Solution 43: Black to play

Lu Shanglei – Dai Changren

Tianjin 2018/19

Black blocks the influence of the b3-bishop by tactical means: **25…Nd5!** (after the passive defence 25…Rf8? 26 Rg3 Ne8 27 Qxh6 +/– Black has problems due to his lack of counterplay) **26 Bxd5 Qxd5 27 exd5** (or 27 Qxg7+ Kxg7 =) **27…fxg6** with an equal position.

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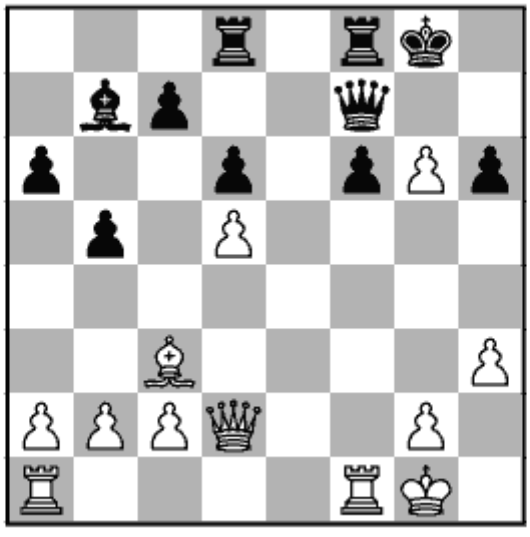

Solution 44: Black to play

Calzetta Ruiz – Wallace

Stockholm 2018/19

23…Qxd5!

After 23…Qxg6? 24 Rf4! +– Black's king is too weak, and his position is hopeless. For example:

a) 24…h5 25 Raf1 f5 26 R1f3 Kh7 27 Qd3 +–.

b) 24…f5 25 Qd3!? (25 Raf1 +–) 25…Kh7 26 Re1 Rde8 27 Rxe8 Rxe8 28 Rxf5 +–.

c) 24…Kh7 25 Raf1 f5 (as played in the game) 26 R1f3 Rde8 27 Qf2 +–.

24 Rad1!

This is White's only way to fight for a meaningful advantage. 24 Qf2 Rde8 25 Rad1 (or 25 Rae1 Qg5) 25…Qh5 with a roughly equal position. Or 24 Qxd5+ Bxd5 25 Bxf6 Rde8 +=.

24…Qxd2 25 Rxd2 Kg7

While Black is clearly somewhat worse, he should hold the game thanks to the opposite-coloured bishops. For example, **26 Rdf2 Kxg6 27 Rxf6+ Rxf6 28 Rxf6+ Kg5**.

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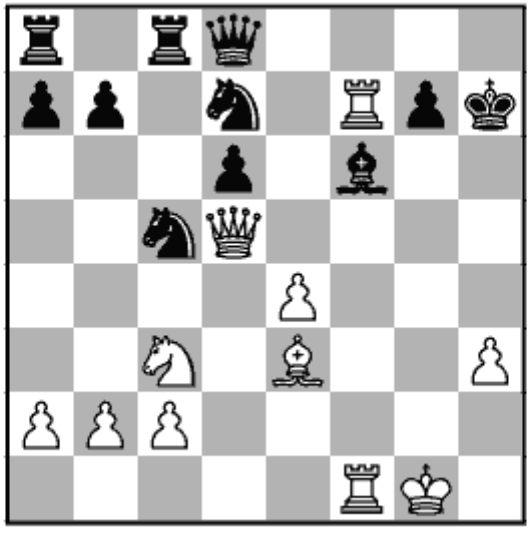

Solution 45: Black to play

B.Petersson – Huse

Stockholm 2018/19

The key task is to limit the white queen's possibilities.

24…Qe8!

Not:

a) 24…Bxc3? 25 Qh5+ Kg8 26 Rxg7+ (or 26 Qd5 Kh7 27 Qh5+ =) 26…Bxg7 27 Qf7+ =.

b) 24…Be5? 25 Rxg7+! Bxg7 (25…Kxg7 26 Qf7+ Kh8 27 Qh5+ =) 26 Qh5+ Kg8 27 Qf7+ = with perpetual check.

25 Rf5 Ne6 0-1

White's attack is over, but the extra piece remains.

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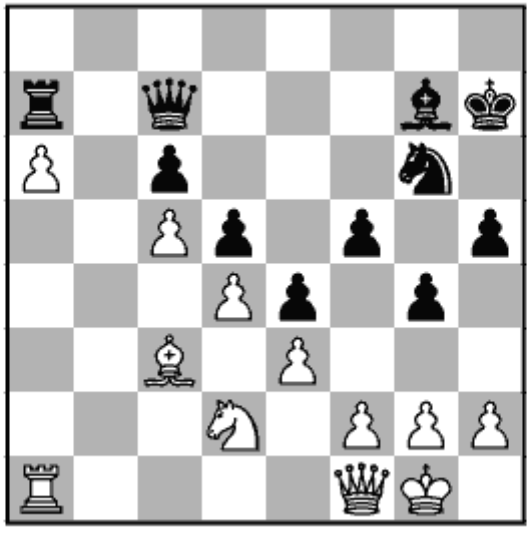

Solution 46: Black to play

I.Damianou – Schnabel

Stockholm 2018/19

35…Qc8! (tying White to the defence of the a-pawn, so that the eventual manoeuvre of the knight to c7 will pick it off; not 35…f4?, when 36 Ba5 Qd7 37 Bb6 +/– shepherds the pawn forward) **36 g3** (the game featured 36 Ra3 Nf8 =) **36…Nf8 37 Nb3** (37 Ra3 Ne6 =) **37…Ne6 38 h4 Nc7** and Black is fine.

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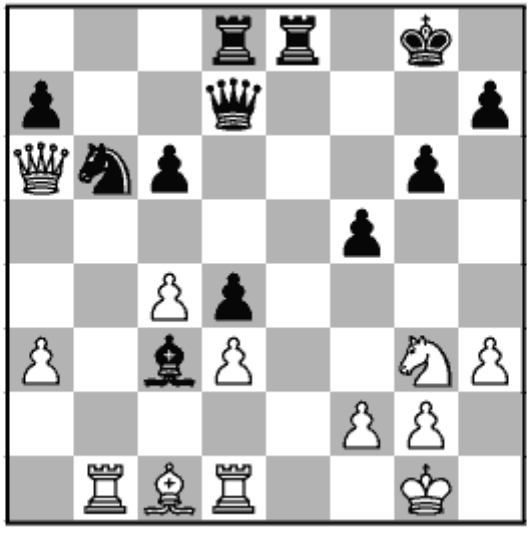

Solution 47: Black to play

Chizhikov – Marzano

Stockholm 2018/19

The key lies in the white queen's lack of squares, though it still seems surprising that the other white pieces can't somehow rescue her majesty. After **24…Re5!** White must now give up either the queen or an exchange: **25 Bd2** (25 Rb4 Bxb4 26 axb4 c5 –+; 25 Rxb6 axb6 26 Qxb6 Ba5 –+) **25…Ra5 26 Qxa5 Bxa5 27 Bxa5 Ra8 –+**. Here the queen is much stronger than a rook plus a bishop.

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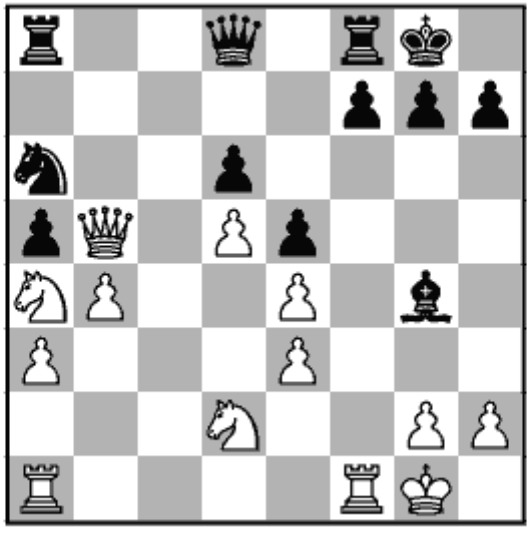

Solution 48: Black to play

J.Jönsson – G.Lund

Stockholm 2018/19

20…Bd7! and after the queen saves its skin, White loses the knight on a4: **21 Qxa5 Qxa5 22 bxa5 Bxa4 –+**. White's position is completely hopeless.

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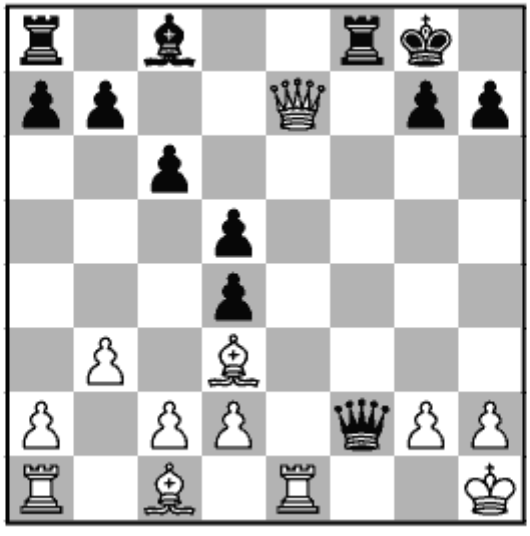

Solution 49: Black to play

Mullick – Hø.Nielsen

Stockholm 2018/19

14…Bh3! 15 gxh3 (after 15 Rg1 Rae8 White can't just move his queen because he would be mated: 16 Qxf8+! {16 Qg5? Qxg1+, mating} 16…Qxf8 17 Rf1 with an unclear position after 17…Bxg2+) **15…Qf3+ 16 Kg1 Qf2+ =** with perpetual check.

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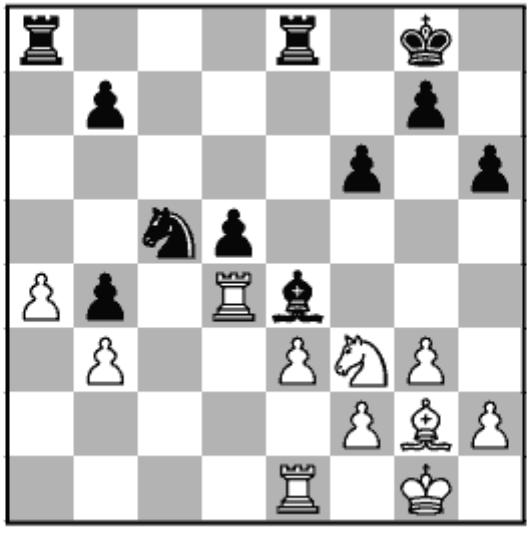

Solution 50: White to play

Åkesson – M.Friedland

Stockholm 2018/19

27 Nd2! (mistaken is 27 Rxb4? Nd3 –+) **27…Bxg2 28 Kxg2** and White has a more or less decisive advantage. The main thing is to move the rook from e1 before picking up the b4-pawn.

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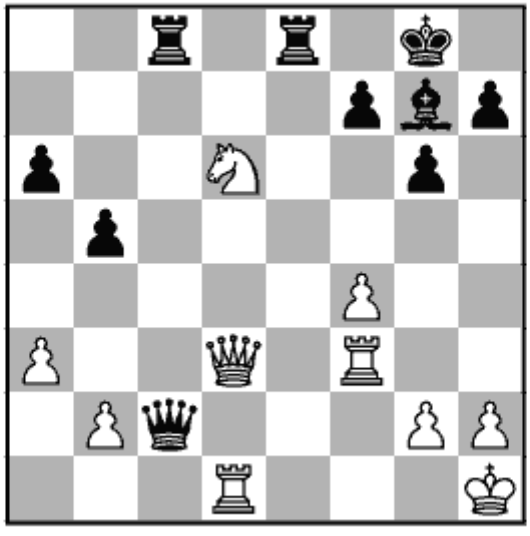

Solution 51: Black to play

Bai Xue – Huang Renjie

Tianjin 2018/19

He must exploit the position of the white queen on d3: **22… Red8!** (not 22…Qxd3? 23 Rfxd3 +–) **23 Nxc8?!** (this loses immediately, but White's position is hopeless in any case; after 23 h3 Qxb2 the game would have dragged on a little) **23… Qxd1+ 0-1**. On 24 Qf1 there follows 24…Qxf1+ 25 Rxf1 Rxc8 –+.

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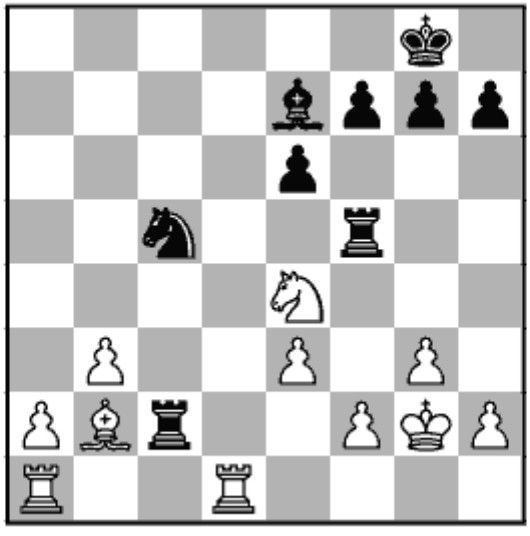

Solution 52: White to play

Hammarström – Åkesson

Stockholm 2018/19

24 Rd2! (24 Nxc5? loses to 24…Rfxf2+ 25 Kg1 Rg2+ –+, while after 24 g4?! Nxe4 25 gxf5 Rxf2+ White has thrown away the win and must fight for a draw) **24…Rxd2** (24… Rxb2?! 25 Rxb2 Nxe4 26 Rc2 +– gives Black two pieces for a rook, but he won't be able to stop White's passed pawns on the queenside) **25 Nxd2 Nd3 26 Bc3** with good chances of winning the game.

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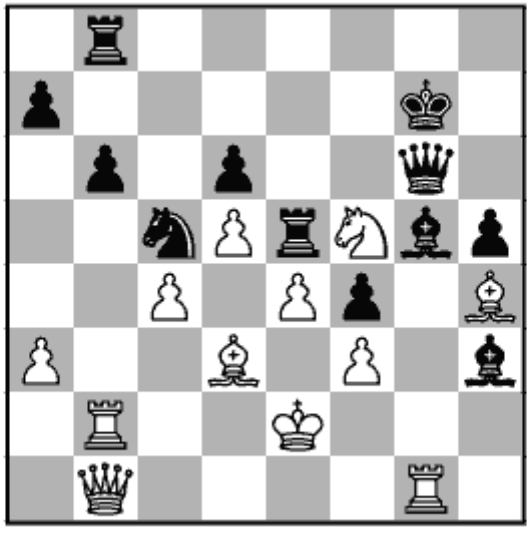

Solution 53: Black to play

Vitenberg – Ramondino

Stockholm 2018/19

39…Qxf5! (not 39…Rxf5? 40 exf5 Qe8+ 41 Kd1 +–, when Black can resign) **40 Rxg5+** (or 40 Bxg5 Qxg5!?) **40…Qxg5 41 Bxg5 Rxg5** with a complex position and chances for both sides.

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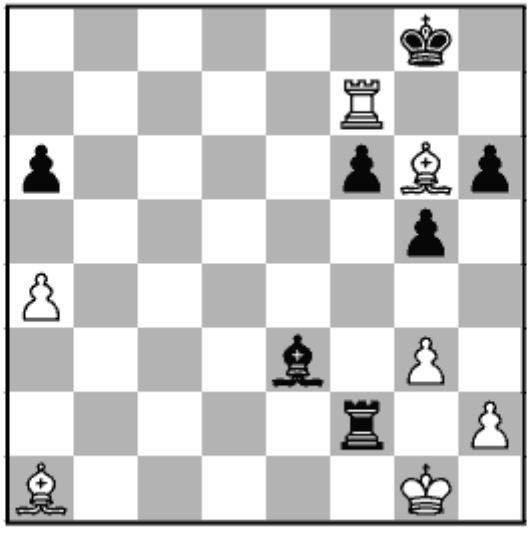


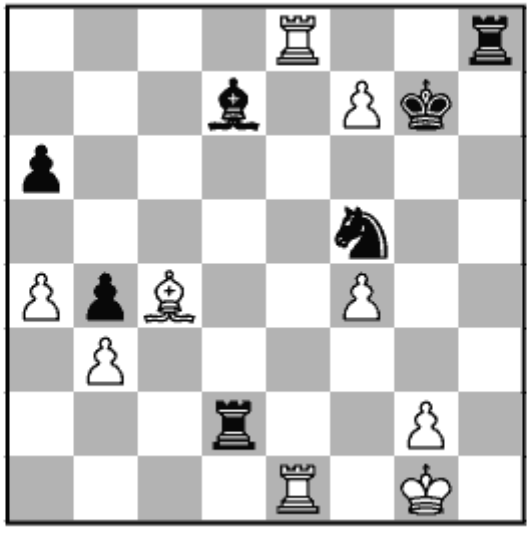
Solution 54: White to play

Ornstein – Hø.Nielsen (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

White needs to improve the position of his rook so that it protects the dark-squared bishop. He starts by gaining time with an attack on the black bishop: **40 Re7!** (after 40 Kh1? Black wins the bishop by 40…Rf1+ 41 Kg2 Rxa1) **40…Bc5** (40…Bb6 doesn't help in view of 41 a5 +–) and now the easiest solution is **41 Rc7 Be3 42 Bc3 +–**, keeping the extra piece: 42…g4!? 43 Bd3 Rd2+ 44 Kf1 Rxd3 45 Rc8+! and 46 Ke2.

back



Solution 55: Black to play

Peng Hongchi – Wang Zijian

Tianjin 2018/19

Black mustn't allow 39 Rg8+. The solution is **38…Rf8!** (38… Bxe8? 39 fxe8Q Rxe8 40 Rxe8 +– leaves White two pawns up) **39 R1e5** (39 g4 Nd6 =+) **39…Rd1+ 40 Kh2 Rd2** with a roughly equal position. White cannot drive the black king away without losing the f7-pawn.

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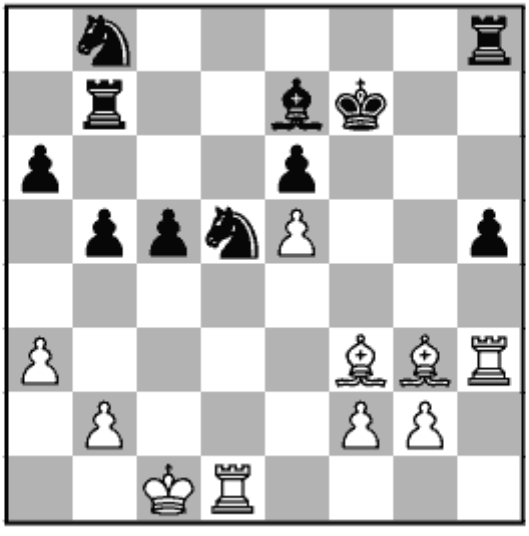

Solution 56: White to play

Czebe – K.Trisha

Mumbai 2018/19

White wins back a knight: **26 Rxd5! Rd7** (26…exd5 27 Bxd5+ +–; 26…h4 27 Rxc5! +–) **27 Rxd7** (27 Rxh5 Rxh5 28 Bxh5+ +–) **27…Nxd7 28 Rxh5 +–**. White has an extra pawn and should win the game.

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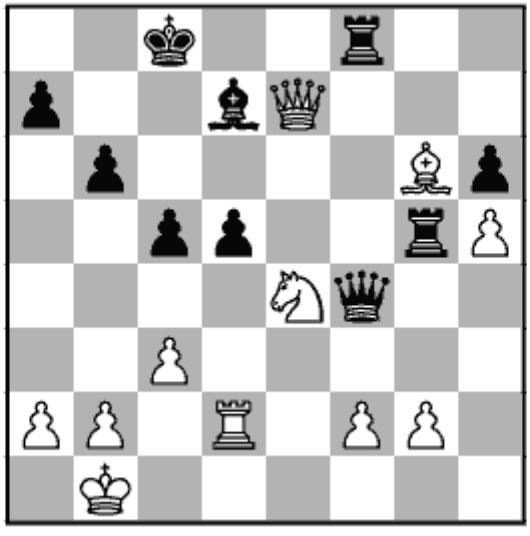


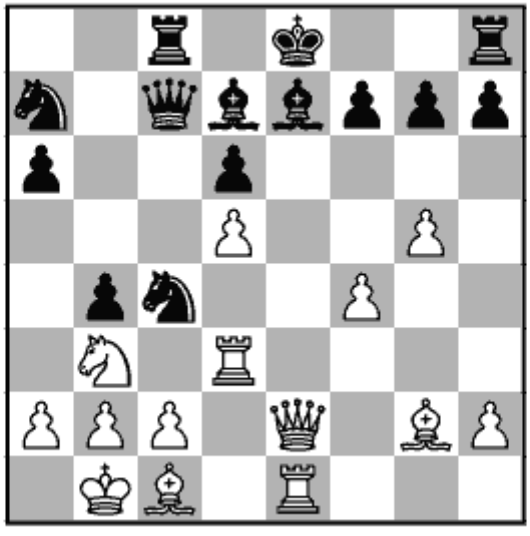
Solution 57: Black to play

Sammed Jaykumar – Gukesh

Mumbai 2018/19

31…Rxg6! (Black wins by removing the knight's defender; instead 31…Rxg2? 32 Nd6+ Kc7 33 Nb5+ is unclear) **32 Rxd5** (32 hxg6 Qxe4+ –+) **32…Rf7 –+** (or 32…Bc6 –+).

back



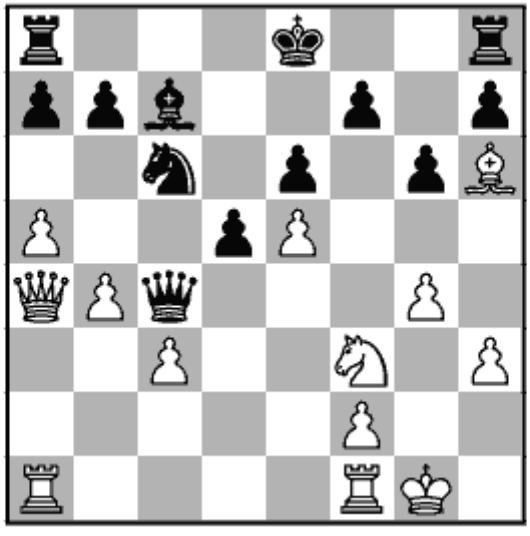
Solution 58: Black to play

Kathmale – Varshini

Mumbai 2018/19

19…0-0! (a standard trick – White now has very little for the knight; instead after 19…Bf5? 20 Nd4! Bxd3 21 cxd3 White has compensation and will at least win back a knight) **20 Nd4** (20 Qxe7 Rfe8 –+) **20…Rfe8 –+**.

back



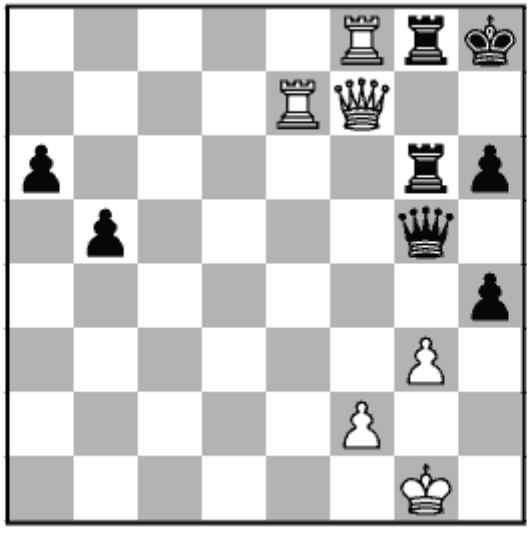
Solution 59: White to play

Raghunandan – Konguvel (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White wants to play b5, but the black queen on c4 is a problem that needs to be removed first, viz. **19 Nd2! Qxc3** (19…Qd3 20 b5 and b6+) **20 Rfc1! Qxh3 21 Rxc6 Qxg4+ 22 Kf1 +–**.

back



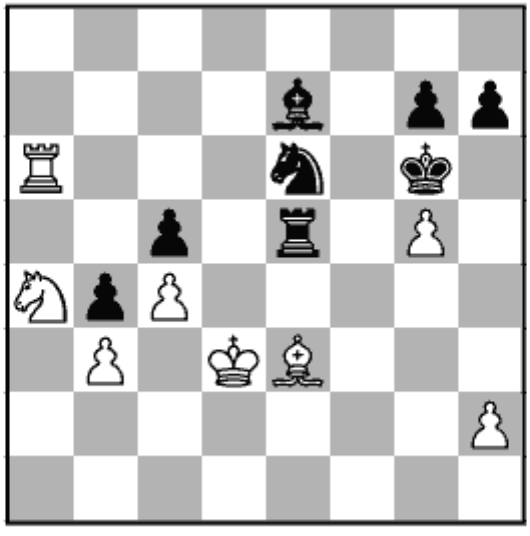
Solution 60: Black to play

A.Gandhi – Elgabry

Mumbai 2018/19

Both sides' moves are forced in the following sequence: **45… Qc1+** (45…Rg7? 46 Rxg8+ Rxg8 47 Qh7#) **46 Kg2** (46 Kh2? hxg3+ 47 fxg3 Qc2+ 48 Kh1 Qd1+ 49 Kh2 Qh5+ –+) **46… Qc6+ 47 Kg1 Qc1+ =** with perpetual check.

back

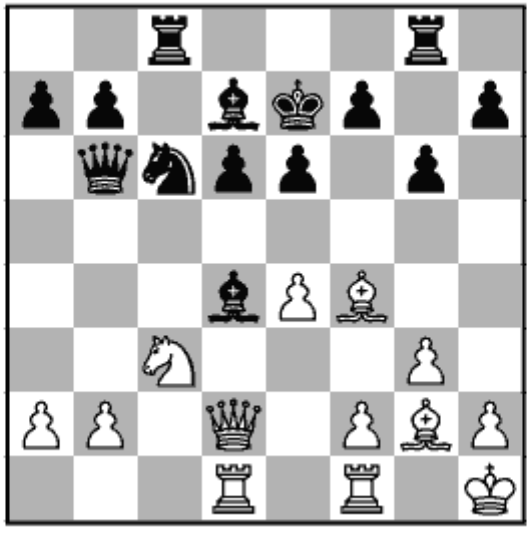


Solution 61: White to play

Training position

1 Bf4! (White attacks the rook to force it to abandon its defence of the e6-knight; instead 1 Nxc5? Rxe3+! is unclear, while 1 Bxc5? is met by 1…Kf5! 2 Bxe7 Nf4+ =) **1…Re1 2 Bg3 Rd1+ 3 Ke2 +–** (or 3 Kc2 +–) with an easy win.

back



Solution 62: White to play

Das – R.Prajesh

Mumbai 2018/19

It's funny that to launch an effective attack on d6, White must remove his bishop from f4: **17 Be3!** (17 Bg5+?! Ke8 +=) **17… Bc5 18 Na4 Qb4 19 Nxc5** (White wins back the pawn with decisive threats on the d-file) **19…Qxd2 20 Rxd2 dxc5 21 Bxc5+ +–**. White will follow up with Rfd1 and Black's position will rapidly fall apart.

back

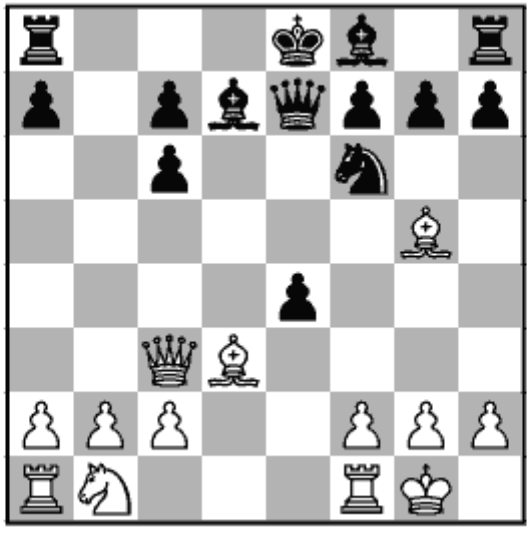
Solution 63: White to play

Tarun – Samant

Mumbai 2018/19

After **21 Bg4!** (the pin against the c8-bishop will cost Black a pawn or the exchange; instead 21 Nf5?!, as played in the game, gives White too little after 21…Qg5) **21…Bb7** (21…Ba6 22 Nxf7+ +/–) **22 Nxf7+ Rxf7 23 Rxd7** White's advantage is more or less decisive.

back



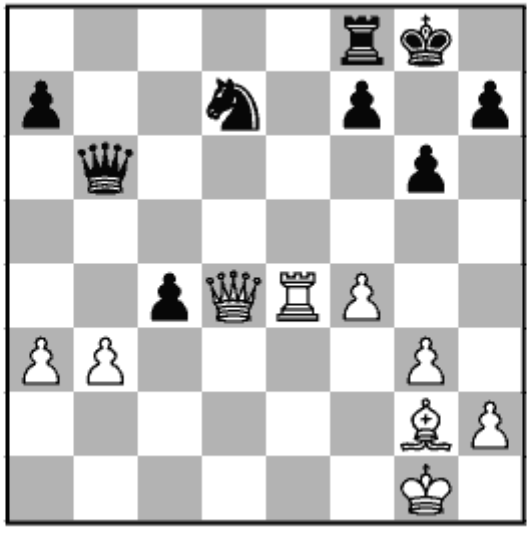
Solution 64: Black to play

Yogesh – Kravtsiv

Visakhapatnam 2012

It looks risky, but Black can take on d3, as his knight then closes the e-file with a gain on time on the white queen: **10… exd3! 11 Re1 Ne4** (11…Be6?? 12 Qxc6+ +–) **12 Qa5** (12 Bxe7 Nxc3 13 Bxf8+ Ne2+ –+) **12…Nxg5 13 Rxe7+ Bxe7 –+**. With two pieces and a rook for the queen, Black wins easily.

back



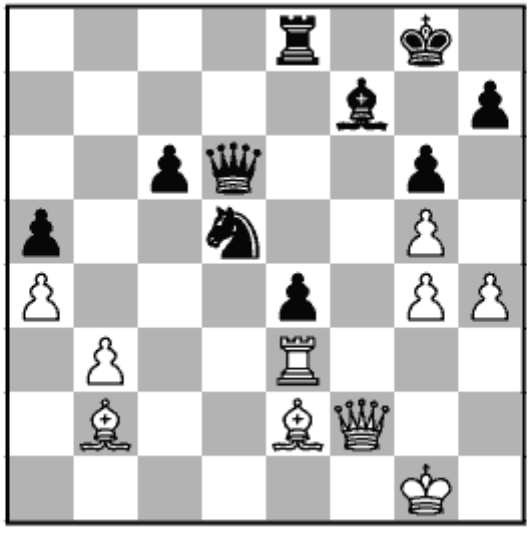
Solution 65: Black to play

Rakshitta – V.Rajesh

Mumbai 2018/19

If Black takes on b3 with his pawn, it will soon be rounded up by White: 28…cxb3? 29 Qxb6 axb6 30 Rb4 Nc5 and now 31 Bd5! = safely corrals the dangerous b3-pawn, while 28… Qxd4+? 29 Rxd4 even gives White winning chances. On the other hand, after **28…Nc5! 29 Re5 Nxb3 30 Qxb6 axb6 –+** (as played in the game) the c4-pawn survives and will soon advance with decisive effect; e.g., **31 Bd5 Rc8 32 Re7 Nd4 33 Rxf7 Kh8** with an easy win.

back



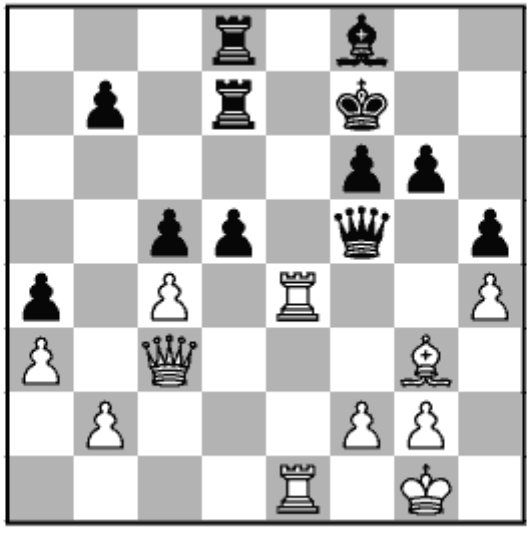
Solution 66: White to play

Elgabry – Soham

Mumbai 2018/19

White must stand firm, and exploit Black's targets on the a2-g8 diagonal: **40 Bc4!** (as played in the game; meekly moving the rook aside is hopeless: 40 Rg3? e3 41 Qe1 Nf4 –+) **40… Re7** (40…Nf4 can be answered by 41 Bf1 or 41 Bxf7+, with equal play in both cases) **41 Bxd5** with an equal position.

back



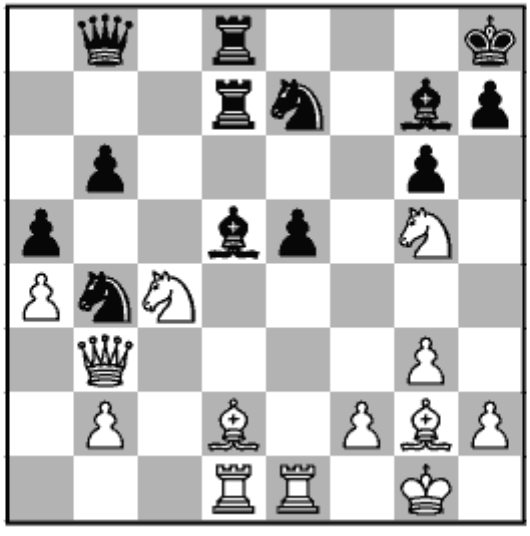
Solution 67: White to play

Varshini – Nguyen Van Huy

Mumbai 2018/19

35 Rf4! (35 cxd5? Qxd5 =) **35…d4 36 Qf3** and Black loses the far more important pawn on f6: **36…Qc2 37 Rxf6+ Kg8 38 Ree6** +– with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 68: Black to play

Šafranska – Nepal (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

The light-squared bishop is a key defensive piece, so Black should preserve it.

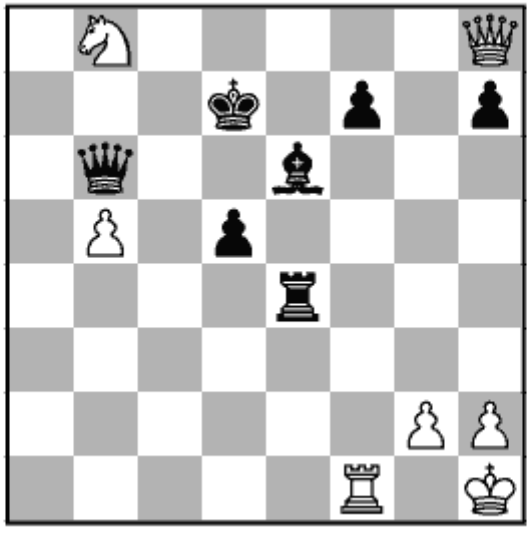
26…Bg8!

Not 26…Nbc6? 27 Bc3 (or 27 Bxd5!? Nxd5 28 Bc3 +–) 27… Nd4 28 Bxd4 exd4 29 Bxd5 Nxd5 30 Qb5 +– with a decisive advantage for White.

27 Bxb4 Rxd1 28 Rxd1 Rxd1+ 29 Qxd1 axb4 +=

White is only a little better. **30 Qd7** is well met by **30…Qc8!**.

back



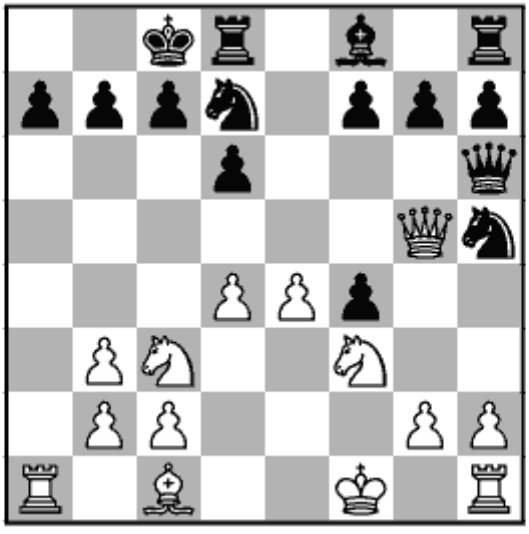
Solution 69: Black to play

N.Kumar – Y.Liou (variation)

Burlingame 2019

The key point is that if the king goes to d6, it can come under check from f8. **41…Kc7** (avoiding 41…Ke7? 42 Nc6+ Kd7 43 Ne5+ +– and 41…Kd6? 42 Qf8+ Kc7 {42…Ke5 43 Nc6+ +–} 43 Na6+ Kd7 44 Nc5+ +–) **42 Rc1+** (42 Na6+ Kd7 with a roughly equal position) **42…Rc4** and Black is OK as long as he is careful where he puts his king: **43 Qe5+** (43 Na6+ Kd7 =) **43…Kb7 =**.

back



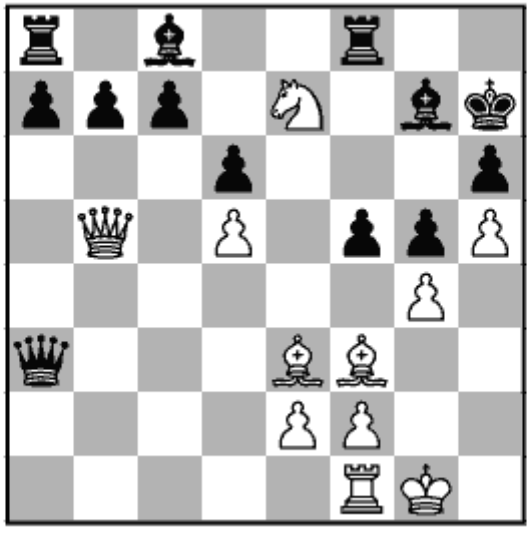
Solution 70: Black to play

D.Mackenzie – Sarvadh

Burlingame 2019

No. After **12…Ng3+?** (12…a6 =) **13 Qxg3! fxg3 14 Bxh6 gxh6** (as played in the game), **15 Rxa7 +/–** gives White an extra pawn and good chances to win.

back



Solution 71: White to play

Elgabry – Subhayan

Mumbai 2018/19

White can activate his rook, while also winning a pawn back.

24 Rc1!

Not 24 Ng6? Rd8 (played in the game) 25 Rc1 Bd7 26 Qb1 c5 –+.

24…a6

24…Qb2 25 Qxb2 Bxb2 26 Rxc7 and with such a strong rook, White can be no worse: 26…Kh8 27 Ng6+ Kg8 28 Ne7+ =.

25 Qb1 Qa5 26 gxf5

Or even 26 Be4!?, also with unclear play.

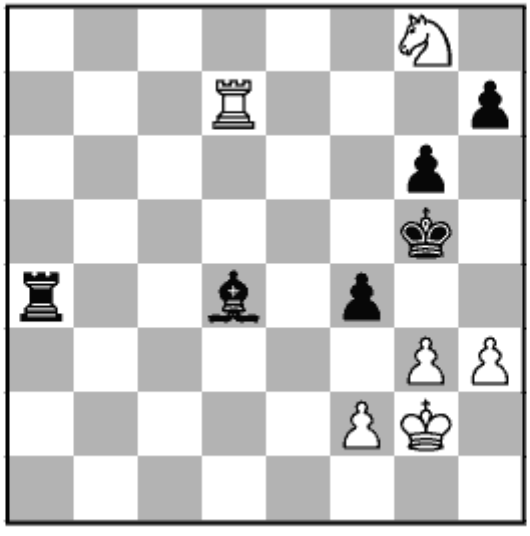
26…Bf6 27 Bd4

with a completely unclear position.

back

2: Checkmate

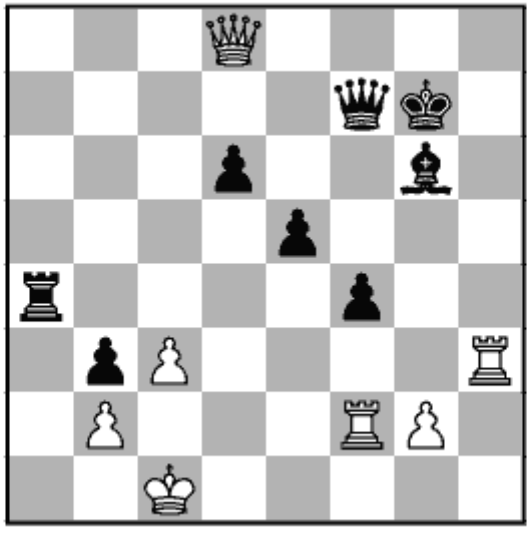
The difficulty level in this short chapter of 30 puzzles is similar to the previous one, or maybe a little lower. In each position there is a checkmate idea. To make it more of a challenge for yourself, try to work it out all the way to mate in each case, rather than just identifying the correct move in the diagram position. Only the last two puzzles in the chapter rise to level 3 in difficulty, as the mating lines are rather longer, and there are some false paths to avoid.



Puzzle 72: White to play

White mates in two moves.

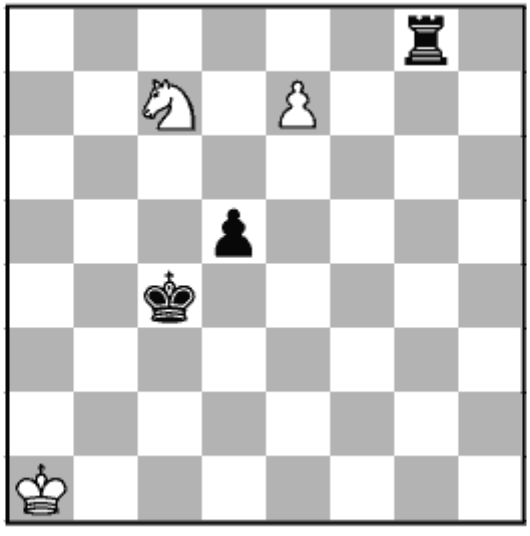
answer



Puzzle 73: Black to play

How does Black force mate?

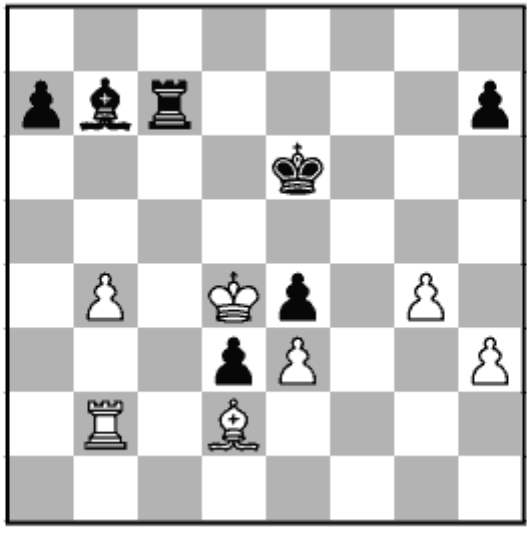
answer



Puzzle 74: Black to play

How does Black win?

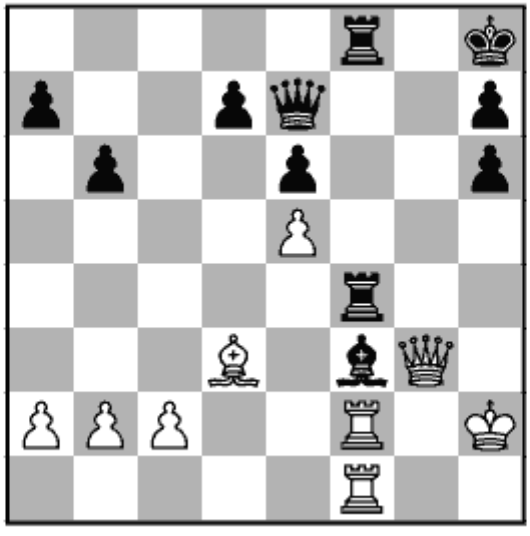
answer



Puzzle 75: Black to play

In the endgame you are meant to activate your king, but here White has gone too far.

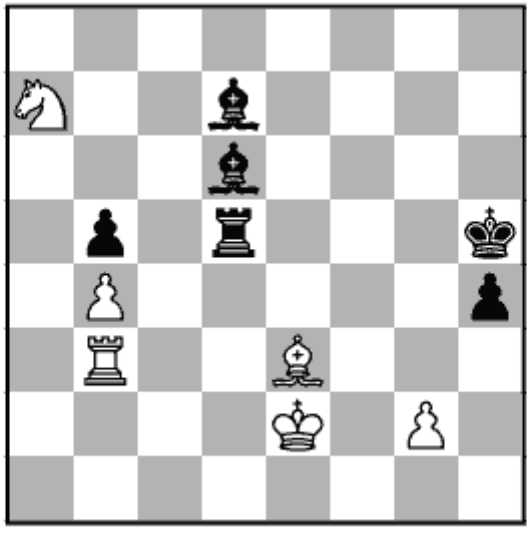
answer



Puzzle 76: Black to play

Black forces mate in short order.

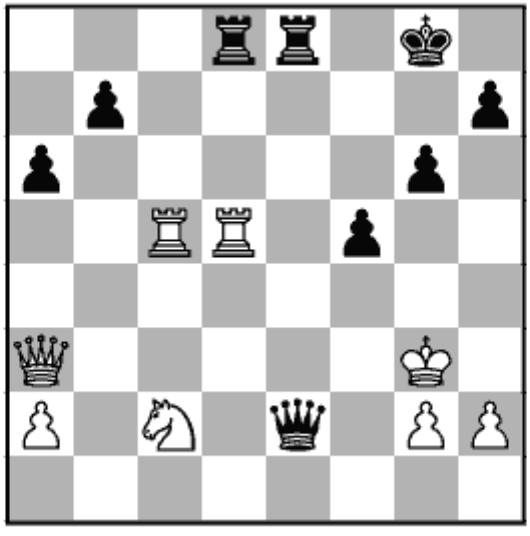
answer



Puzzle 77: Black to play

Black mates in three moves.

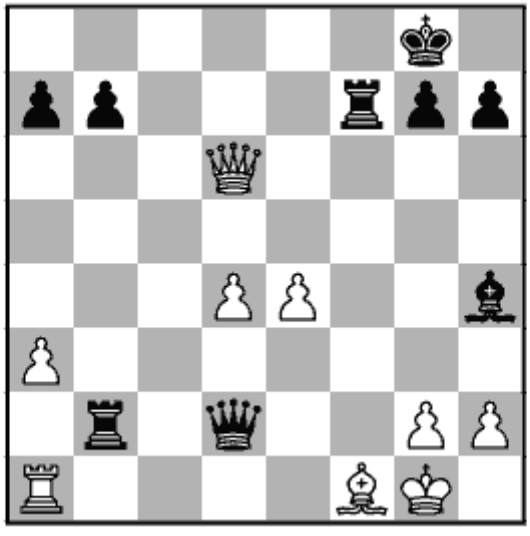
answer



Puzzle 78: Black to play

Black mates in three moves.

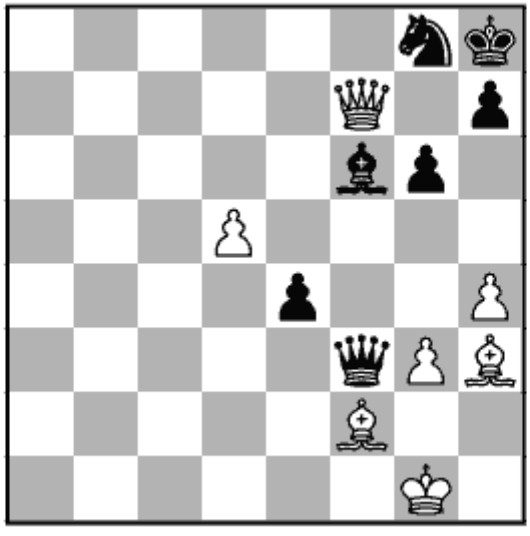
answer



Puzzle 79: White to play

White mates in four moves.

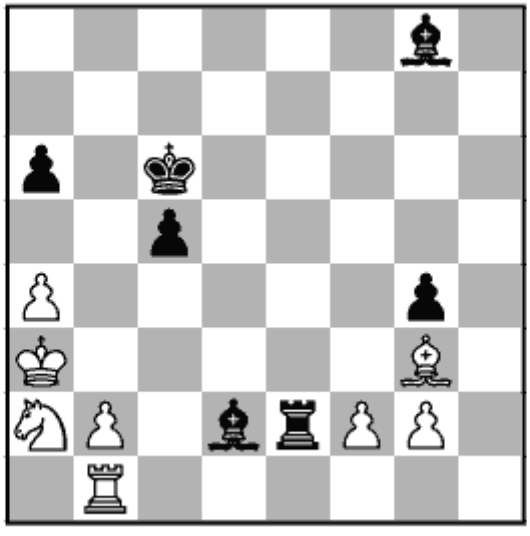
answer



Puzzle 80: White to play

How does White force mate?

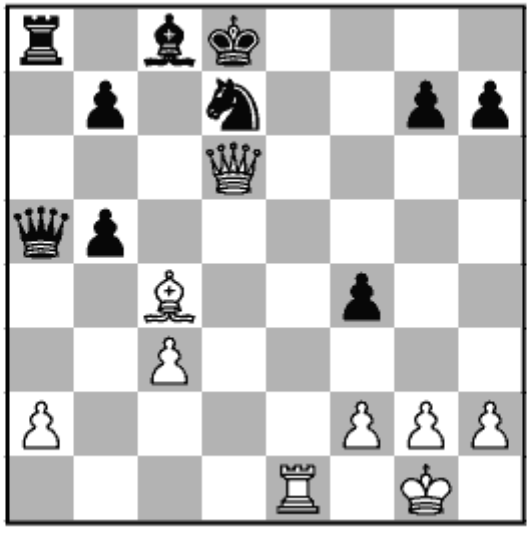
answer



Puzzle 81: Black to play

How does Black hunt down the white king?

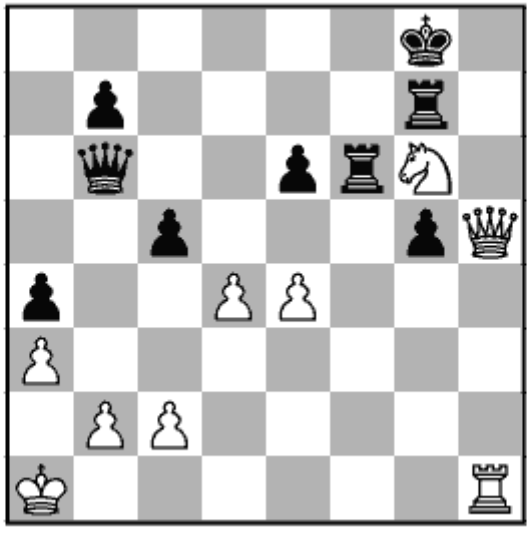
answer



Puzzle 82: White to play

How should White finish off the game?

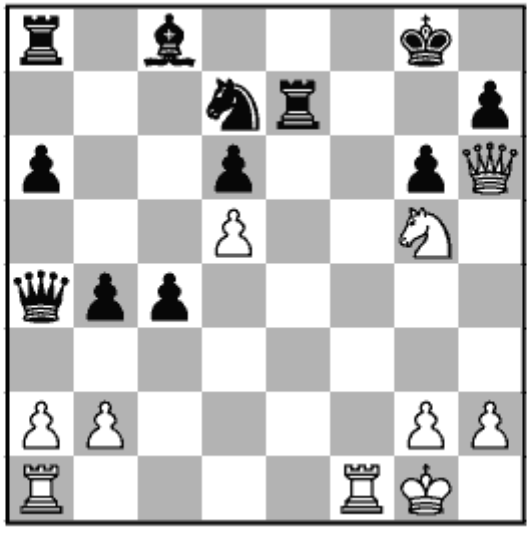
answer



Puzzle 83: White to play

White mates in five moves.

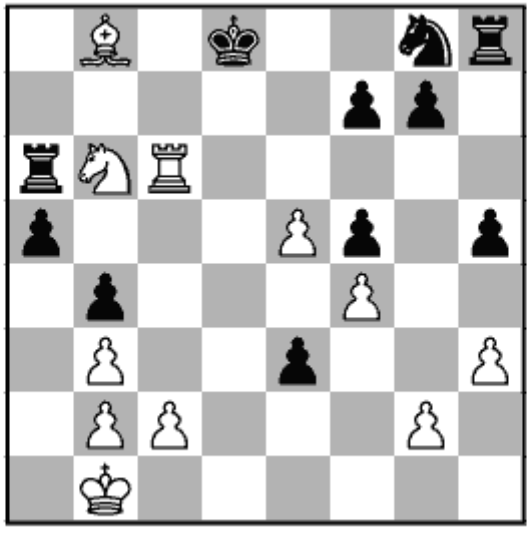
answer



Puzzle 84: White to play

How does White continue his attack?

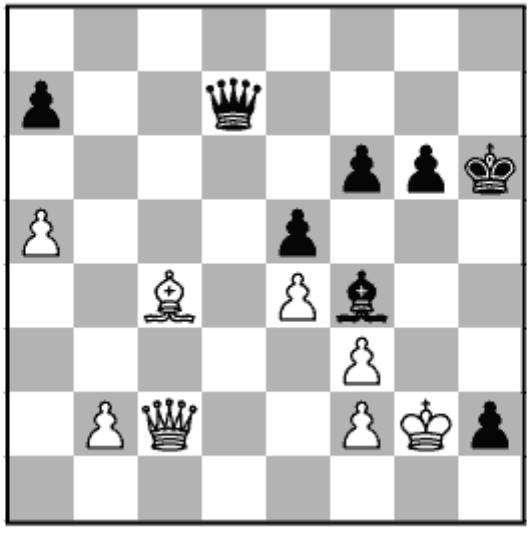
answer



Puzzle 85: White to play

How does White force mate?

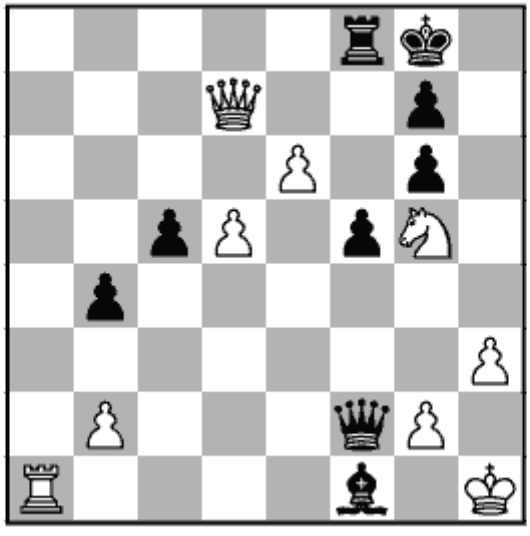
answer



Puzzle 86: Black to play

How does Black bring the game to a successful conclusion?

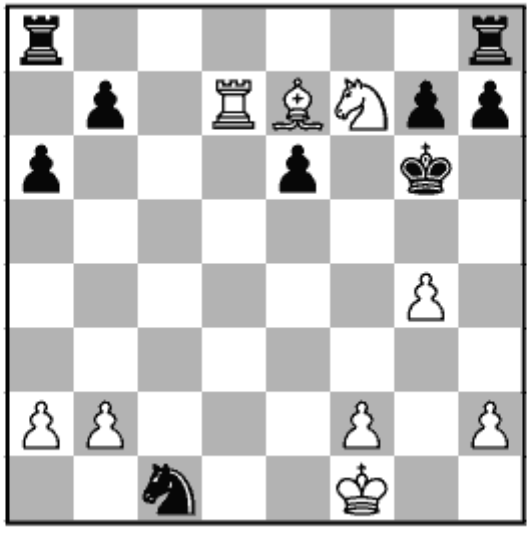
answer



Puzzle 87: White to play

White is threatened with mate. What should he do?

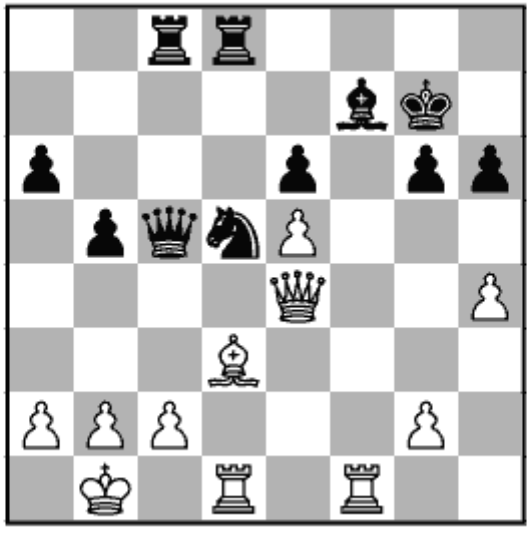
answer



Puzzle 88: White to play

How did White finish off the game?

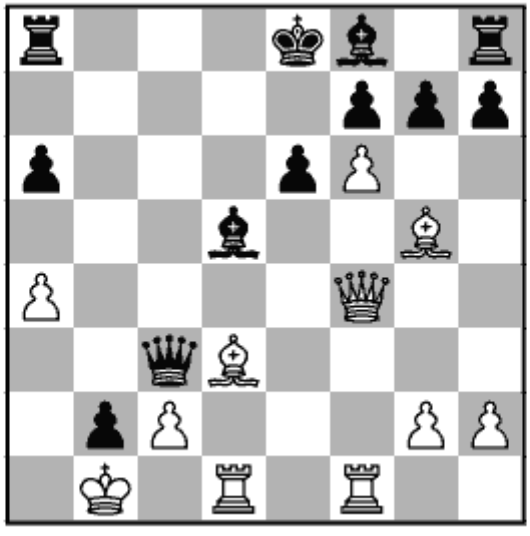
answer



Puzzle 89: White to play

How does White get to grips with the black king?

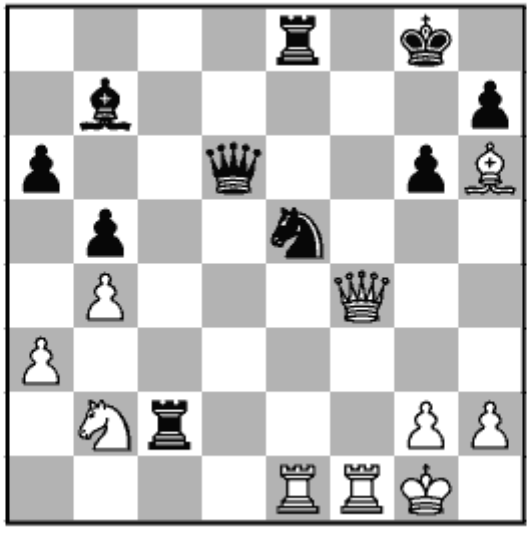
answer



Puzzle 90: Black to play

Black is well on top, but how can he deliver a quick mate?

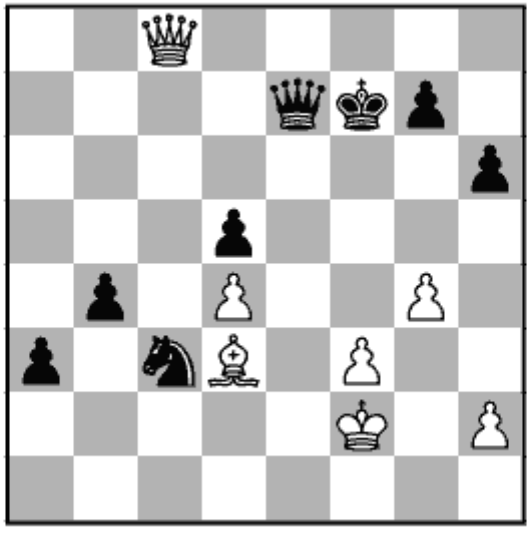
answer



Puzzle 91: White to play

How does White bring the game to an end?

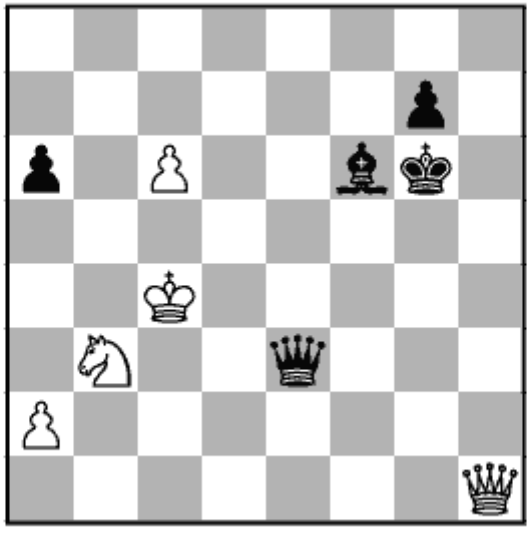
answer



Puzzle 92: White to play

Can you see White's mating idea?

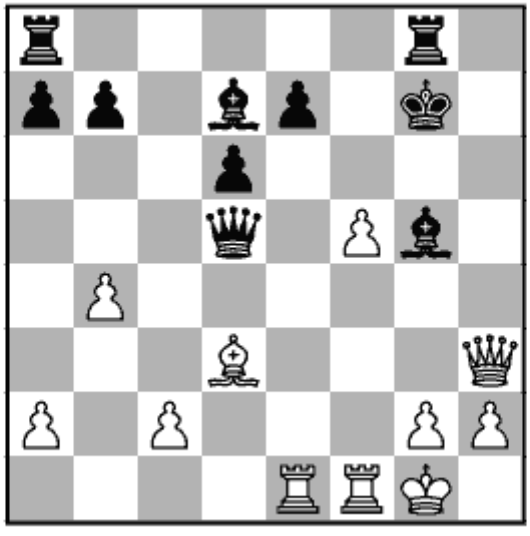
answer



Puzzle 93: Black to play

How can Black finish off the game?

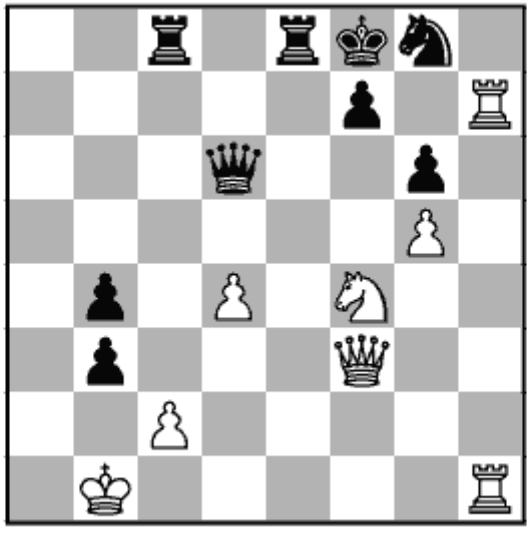
answer



Puzzle 94: White to play

How does White wrap things up?

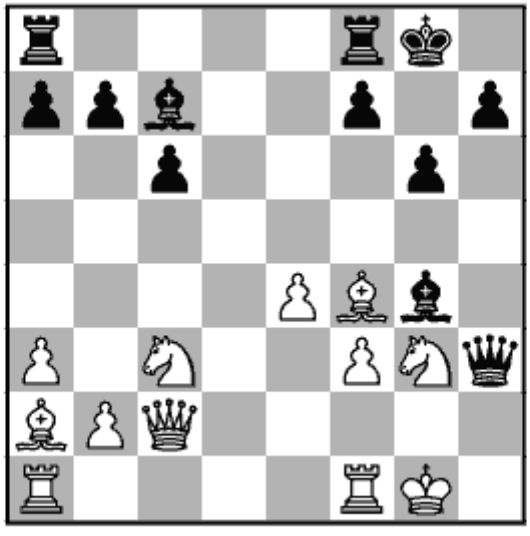
answer



Puzzle 95: White to play

Can White finish off his opponent right away?

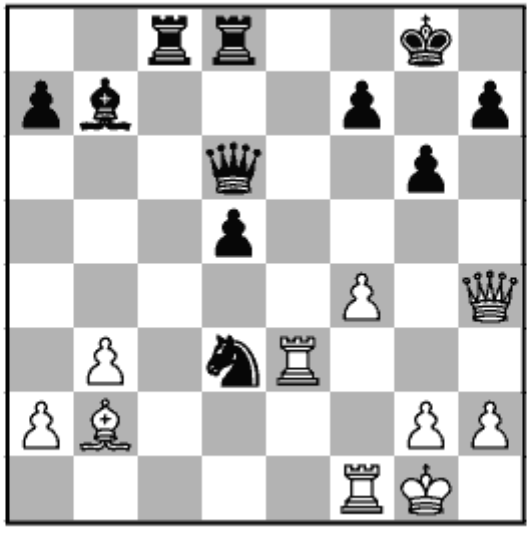
answer



Puzzle 96: Black to play

How does Black force mate?

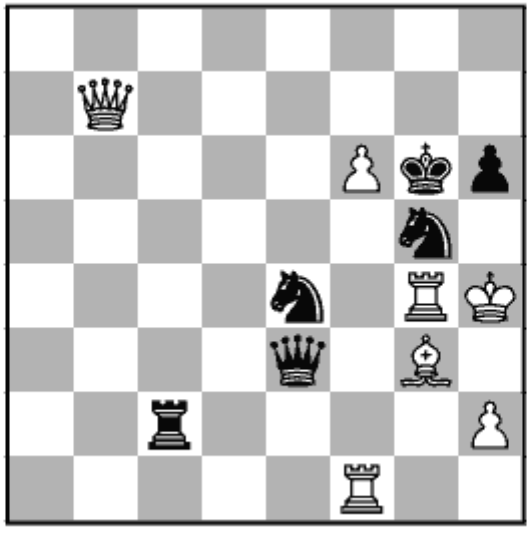
answer



Puzzle 97: White to play

Black has just taken a bishop on d3. How should White respond?

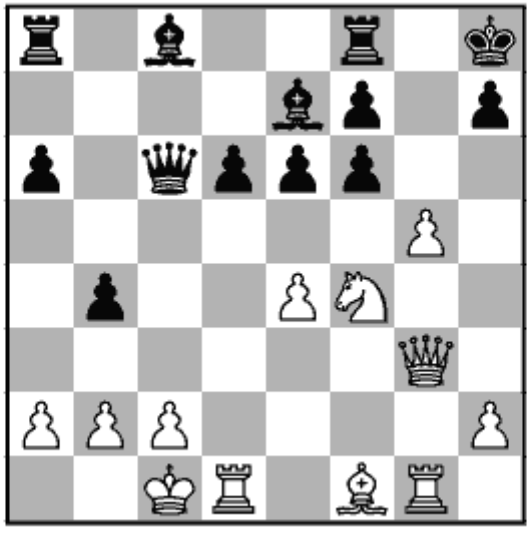
answer



Puzzle 98: Black to play

How can Black finish off the game?

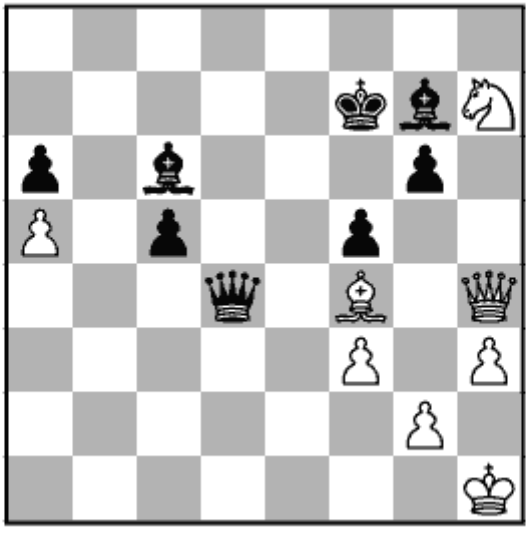
answer



Puzzle 99: White to play

How can White force mate in a few moves?

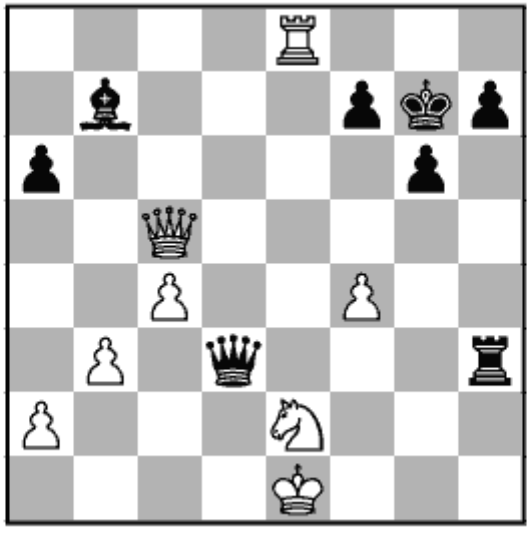
answer



Puzzle 100: Black to play

Can Black launch a mating attack?

answer

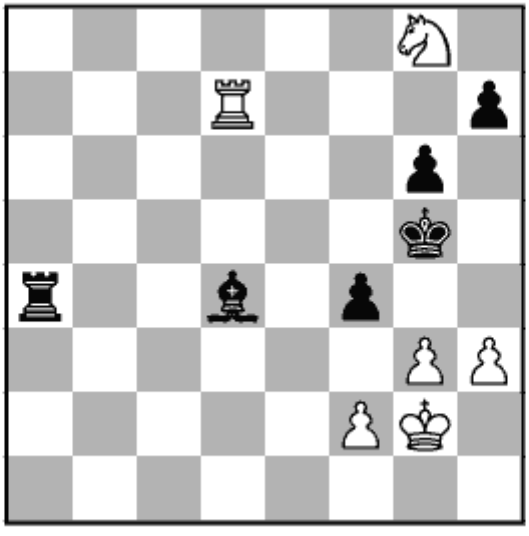


Puzzle 101: White to play

White mates in five moves.

answer

Solutions for Chapter 2



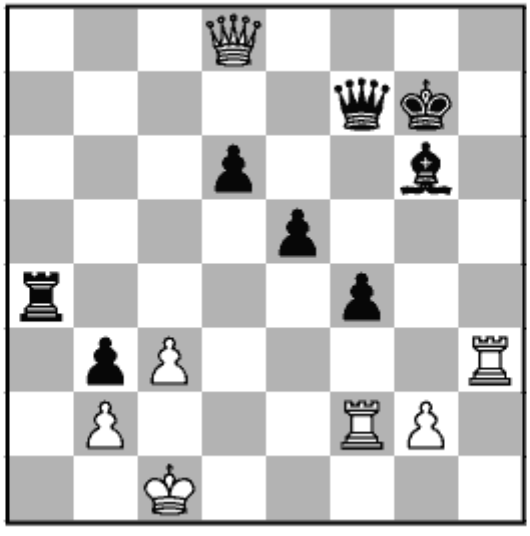
Solution 72: White to play

R.Berzinš – Ungurs (variation)

Latvian Ch, Riga 2019

46 Rd5+ Be5 47 Rxe5#

back



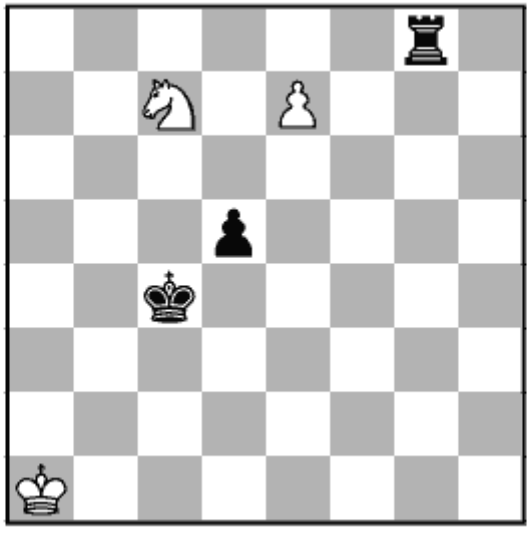
Solution 73: Black to play

Dzjuba – Levchenkov

Latvian Ch, Riga 2019

After **38…Ra1+** White resigned in view of **39 Kd2 Qd5+! 40 Ke2** (or 40 Rd3 Qxd3#) **40…Qd1#**.

back



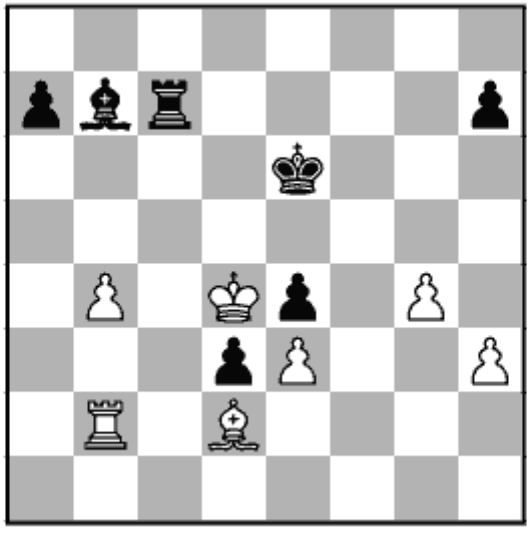
Solution 74: Black to play

Auyeung – O.Pollack (based on)

London 2019

52…Kb3! with mate on the back rank: **53 e8Q Rg1+ 54 Qe1 Rxe1#**.

back



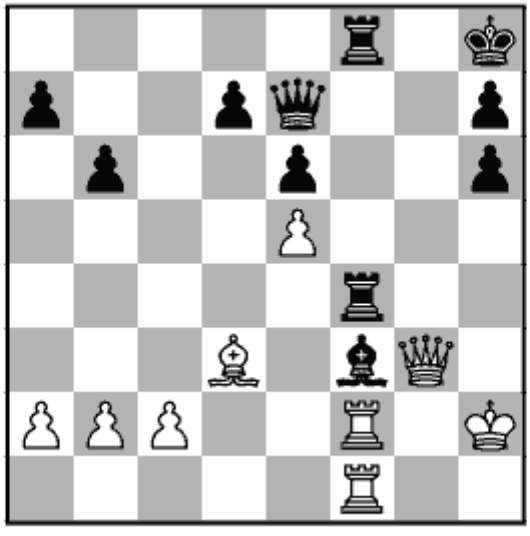
Solution 75: Black to play

Y.Rahman – R.Patel (based on)

London 2019

After **53…Bd5!** there's no defence against mate: **54 Rc2 dxc2 55 h4 Rc4#**.

back



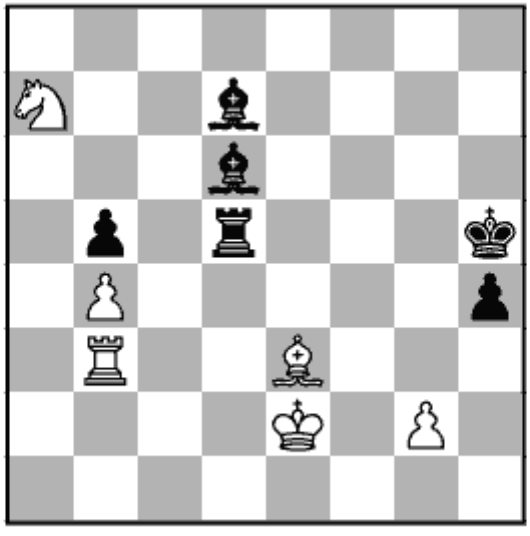
Solution 76: Black to play

Marn – Bistrić

Sarajevo 2019

27…Rh4+ 28 Qh3 (the game ended 28 Kg1 Rh1#) **28… Rxh3+ 29 Kxh3 Qg5** (29…Rf4!? 30 Rxf3 Qh4+ 31 Kg2 Rg4+, mating) **30 Rxf3 Rg8**, with mate in two moves.

back



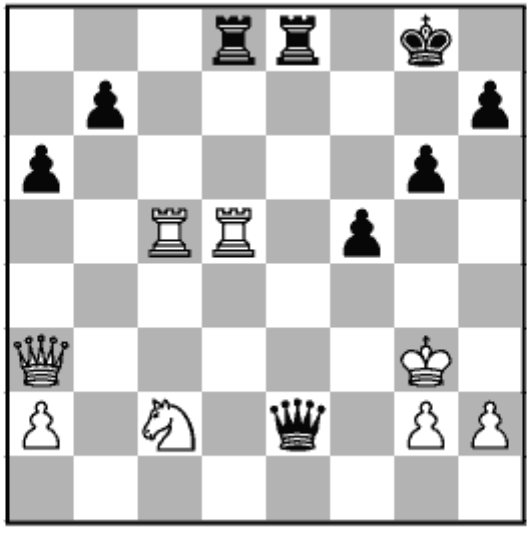
Solution 77: Black to play

Stasans – Stepins (variation)

Latvian Ch, Riga 2019

60…Bg4+ 61 Kf2 (61 Ke1 Rd1+ 62 Kf2 Bg3#) **61…Bg3+ 62 Kf1 Rd1#**.

back



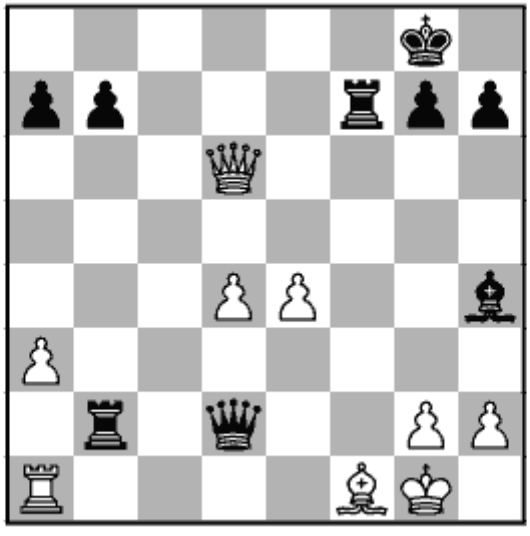
Solution 78: Black to play

I.Berzinš – Mustaps

Latvian Ch, Riga 2019

33…Qg4+! caused White to resign. It's mate after **34 Kf2 Re2+ 35 Kf1 Qxg2#**.

back



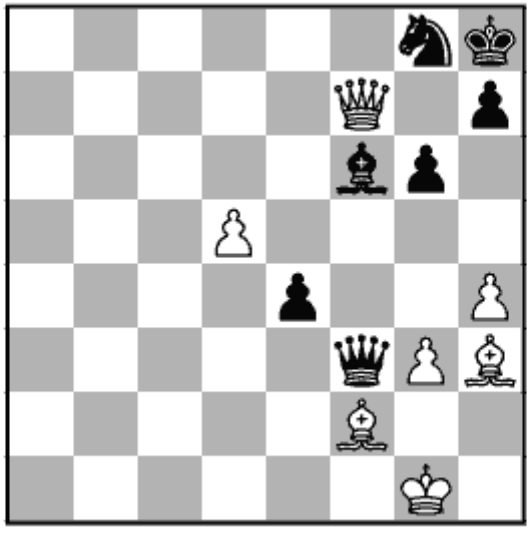
Solution 79: White to play

Navaratnam – De Seroux

Iraklion 2019

24 Qb8+! Bd8 (in the game Black resigned after 24…Rf8 25 Bc4+ in view of 25…Kh8 26 Qxf8#) **25 Qxd8+ Rf8 26 Bc4+ Kh8 27 Qxf8#**.

back



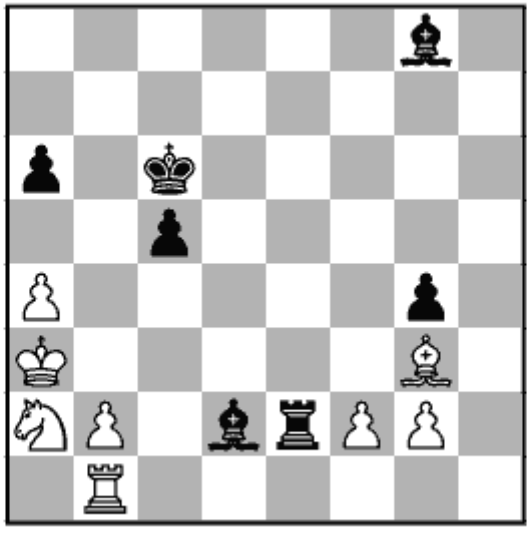
Solution 80: White to play

Zymberi – Bujupi (variation)

Kosovo Team Ch, Prishtina 2019

After **48 Be6!** there's no defence against mate: **48…Ne7** (or 48…Qd1+ 49 Kh2 with mate in a couple of moves) **49 Qf8+ Ng8 50 Qxg8#**.

back



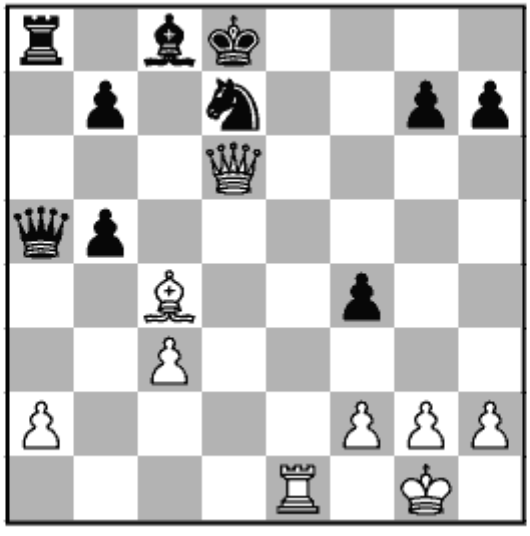
Solution 81: Black to play

Takahashi – Yamada (based on)

Japanese Ch, Tokyo 2019

34…a5! with mate in three more moves: **35 b4** (35 b3 Bb4+ 36 Nxb4+ axb4#) **35…Bxb4+ 36 Nxb4+ cxb4+ 37 Rxb4 Ra2#**.

back



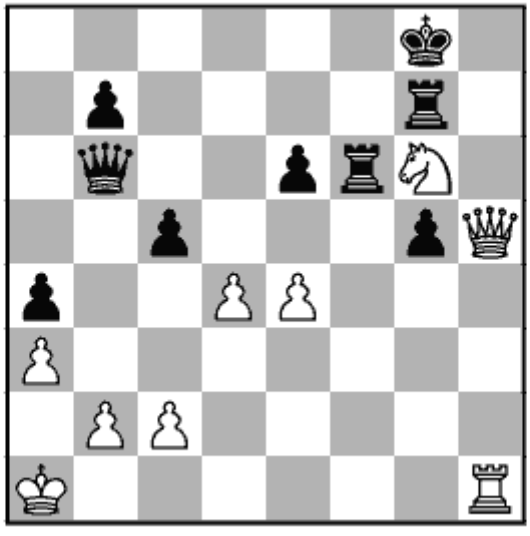
Solution 82: White to play

Kardashevsky – Antonenko

Russian Team Ch, Sochi 2019

After **20 Bf7!** Black resigned as it's mate next move: **20… Qxc3 21 Re8#**.

back



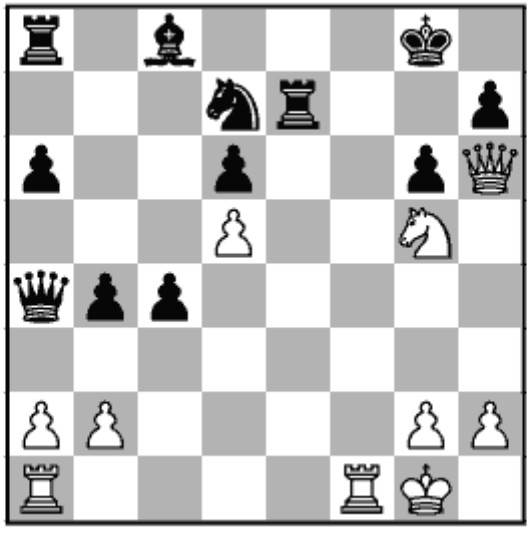
Solution 83: White to play

Nomin-Erdene – Martić

Novi Sad 2019

30 Qh8+ Kf7 31 Ne5+! and Black resigned in view of 31… Ke7 32 Qxg7+ Ke8 (32…Kd6 33 Qd7#) 33 Rh8+ Rf8 34 Rxf8#.

back



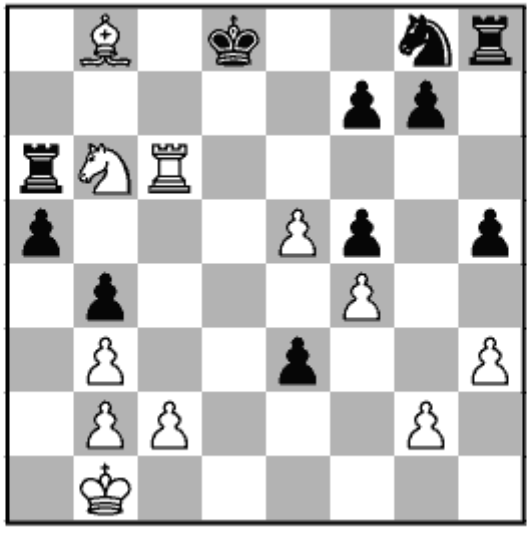
Solution 84: White to play

Kraus – Kislinsky

Czech Ch, Ostrava 2019

White needs to remove the strong defensive rook from e7. He played **26 Rae1!** (not 26 Ne6? Bb7 –+), when it is mate in at most four moves: 26…Ne5 27 Rf8#, 26…Rxe1 27 Qxh7# or 26…Qa5 27 Rxe7 Qc5+ 28 Kh1, mating.

back



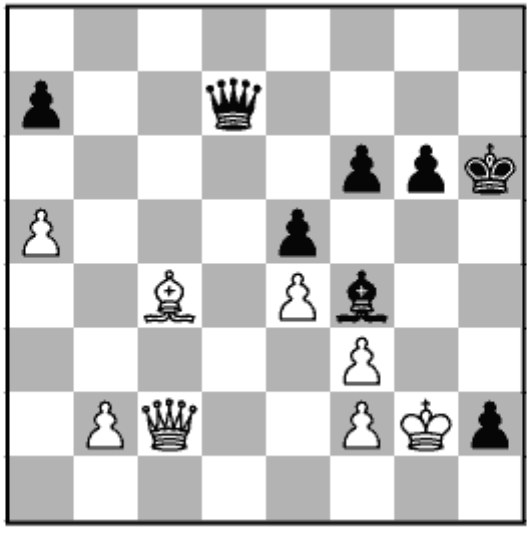
Solution 85: White to play

Nigmatov – Pourramezanali (variation)

Nakhchivan 2019

30 Rc8+ Ke7 31 Bd6+ (31 Rc7+ Kd8 32 Rc8+ merely repeats moves) **31…Ke6 32 Re8+ Ne7 33 Rxe7#**.

back



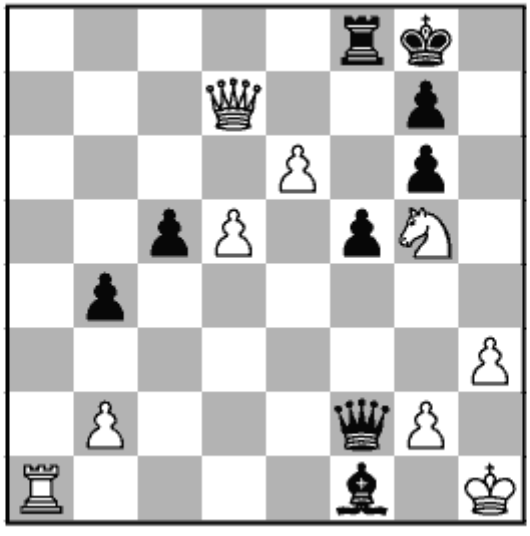
Solution 86: Black to play

Bureš – Roubalik (variation)

Czech Ch, Ostrava 2019

44…Qh3+! (after 44…h1Q+? 45 Kxh1 Qh3+ 46 Kg1 Bh2+ 47 Kh1 = there's no mate) **45 Kxh3 h1Q+ 46 Kg4 Qh5#**.

back



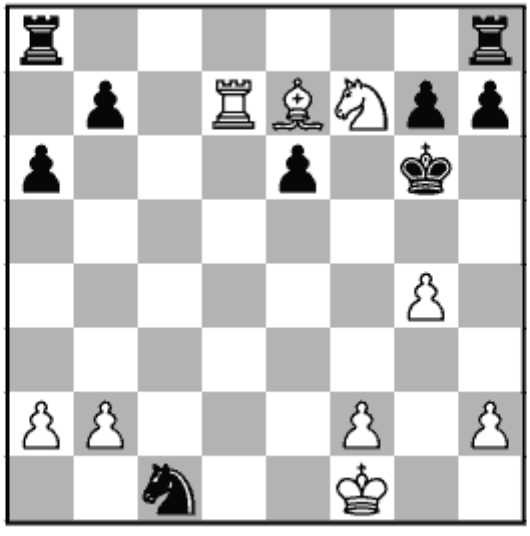
Solution 87: White to play

Mammadzada – Meškovs (variation)

Nakhchivan 2019

He gives a mate of his own: **41 Qf7+! Rxf7 42 exf7+ Kf8 43 Ra8+ Ke7 44 f8Q+ Kd7 45 Qd8#**.

back



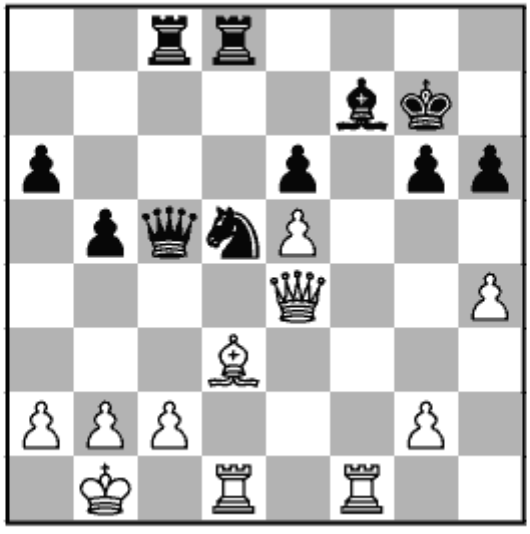
Solution 88: White to play

N.Petrov – Mislaurov

Maikop rapid 2019

28 Ne5+! Kh6 29 h4 (or 29 f4!? g6 30 Bg5#) **29…Rhf8 30 Bg5# (1-0)**.

back



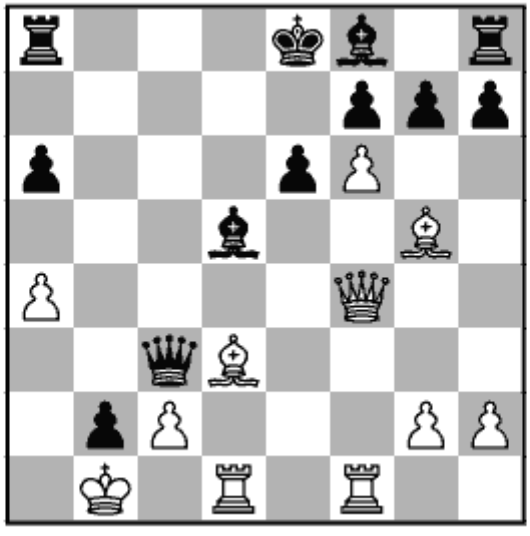
Solution 89: White to play

Savanović – Sabić

Sarajevo 2019

27 Rxf7+! Kxf7 28 Qxg6+ Ke7 (or 28…Kf8 29 Rf1+ with mate in a few moves) **29 Qg7+ 1-0**. 29…Ke8 30 Bg6#.

back



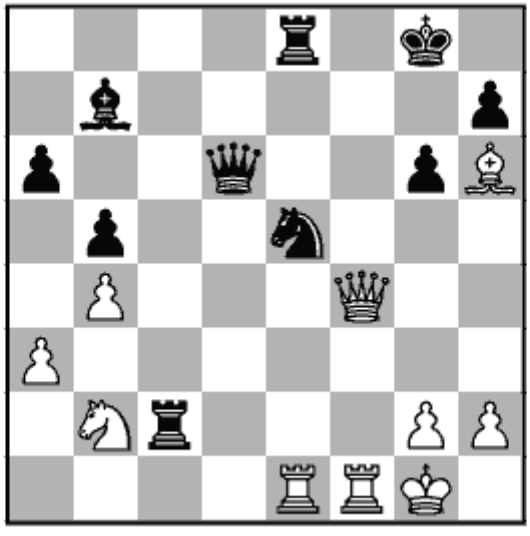
Solution 90: Black to play

Worek – T.Nguyen

Czech Ch, Ostrava 2019

After 18…Qa3? 19 c4 White can still hope for a miracle save, but **18…Ba2+!** caused White to resign due to **19 Kxa2 Qa3+ 20 Kb1 Qa1#**.

back

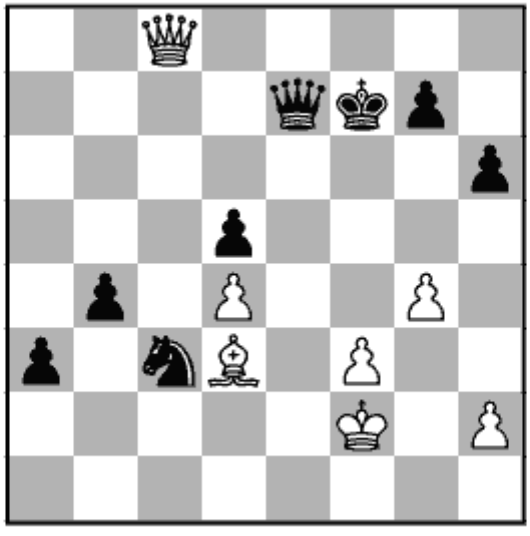


Solution 91: White to play

Training position

White is losing unless he finds the forced mate: **1 Qf7+! Nxf7 2 Rxe8+ Qf8 3 Rxf8#**.

back



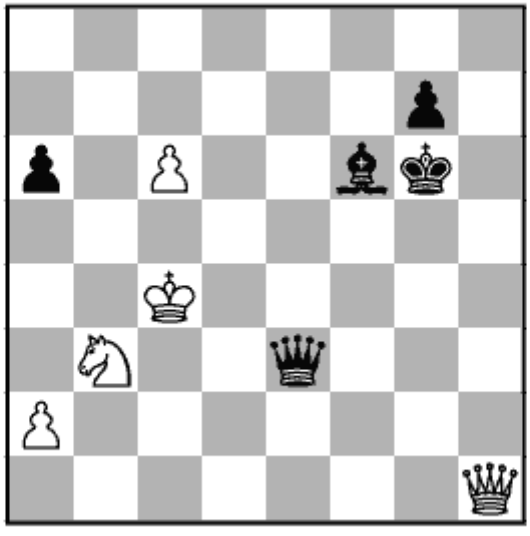
Solution 92: White to play

V.Danielyan – Mehar

Novi Sad 2019

After **66 Bg6+!** Black resigned, seeing 66…Kxg6 67 Qf5#.

back



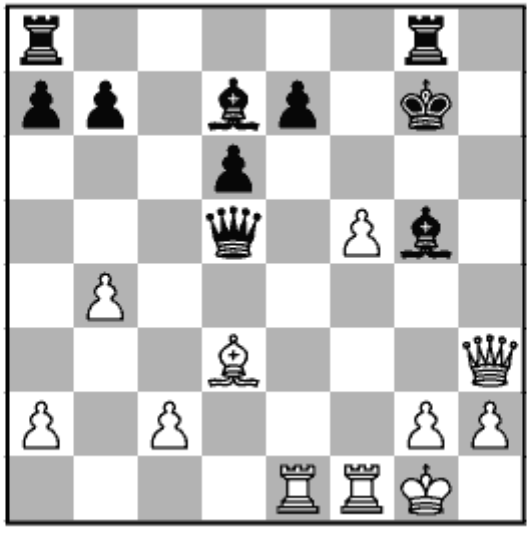
Solution 93: Black to play

Vdovin – Savitsky

Russian Team Ch, Sochi 2019

By giving mate in three moves: **47…Qc3+!** (47…Qe2+? fails due to 48 Kb4) **48 Kd5 Qe5+ 0-1**. 49 Kc4 Qb5#.

back



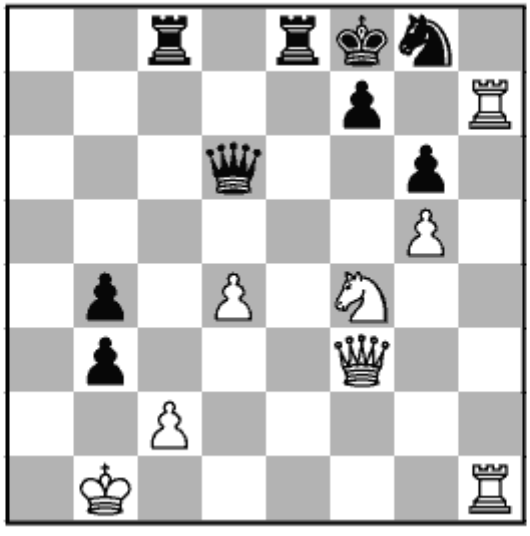
Solution 94: White to play

Jukes – Gamal (variation)

London 2019

With a neat forced mate: **23 f6+! Bxf6** (23…Kf8 24 fxe7++ Ke8 25 Qh5+ and mate next move) **24 Qh7+ Kf8 25 Qxe7#**.

back



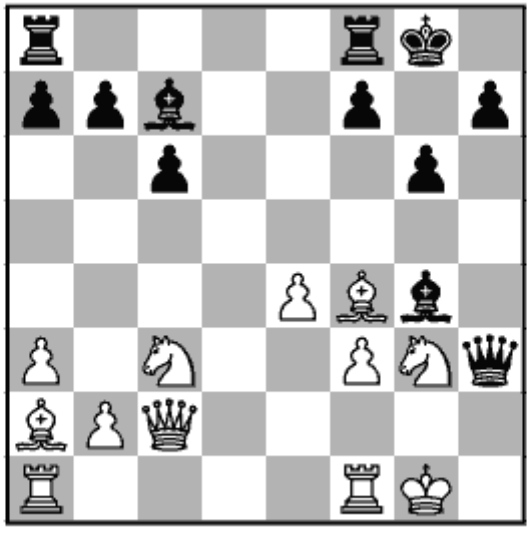
Solution 95: White to play

Gusain – Yadav (variation)

Pune 2019

White delivers mate in three moves: **36 Rxf7+! Kxf7 37 Rh7+! Kf8 38 Nxg6#** (or 38 Ne6#).

back



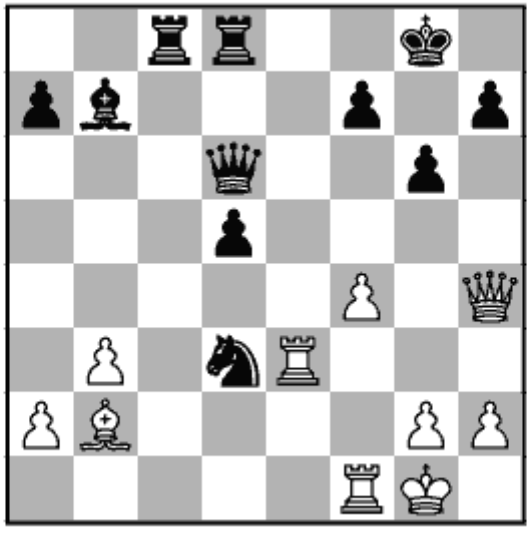
Solution 96: Black to play

Kayonde – S.Miguel

Antananarivo Zonal 2019

19…Bb6+ 20 Rf2 (20 Qf2 Bxf3 changes nothing) **20…Bxf3!** with mate in three more moves: **21 Be3 Bxe3 22 Bxf7+ Rxf7 23 Qe2 Qg2# (0-1)**.

back



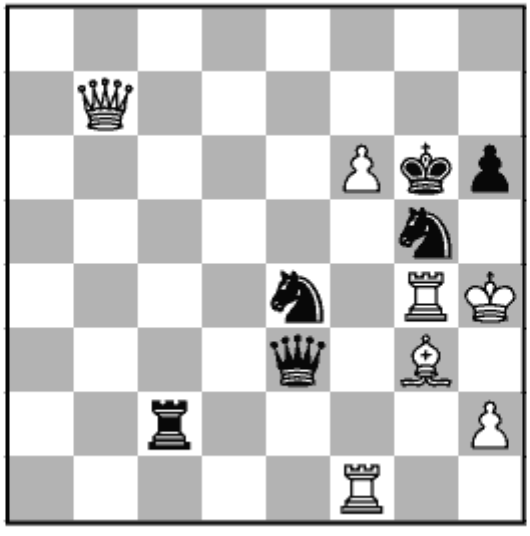
Solution 97: White to play

Sonis – Dappiano (based on)

Italian Team Ch 2019

29 Qxh7+! forces mate: **29…Kxh7 30 Rh3+ Kg8 31 Rh8#**.

back



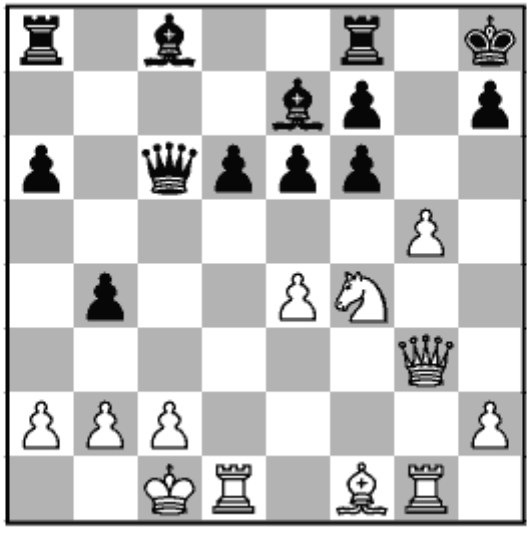
Solution 98: Black to play

G.Köhler – G.Schmidt (based on)

German Seniors Ch, Radebeul 2019

53…Rxh2+ 54 Bxh2 Qh3#

back



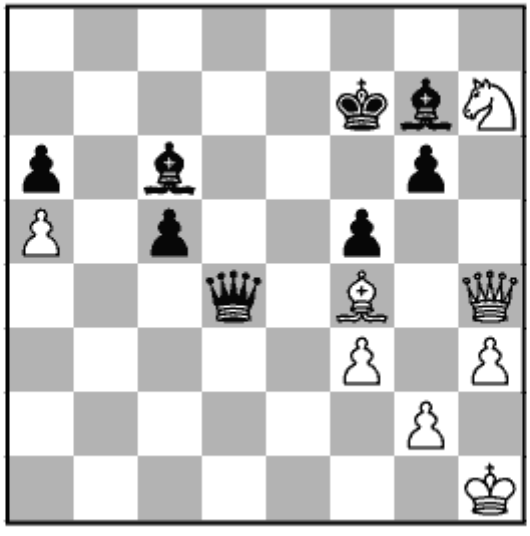
Solution 99: White to play

Bloomer – Ippolito

Denver 2019

20 g6! (exchanges on g6 will leave the black king defenceless) **20…fxg6** (20…Rd8 21 gxf7, mating, or 20…Kg8 21 gxh7++ 1-0, as in the game) **21 Nxg6+ hxg6 22 Qxg6** with inevitable mate.

back



Solution 100: Black to play

Mohite – Laxman

Mumbai 2018/19

42…Qa1+!

42…Qd1+? fails because after 43 Kh2 Bd4 44 Be3! the black queen does not control f6, and 44…Bxe3 45 Qf6+ leaves the game unclear.

43 Kh2 Bd4 44 Ng5+

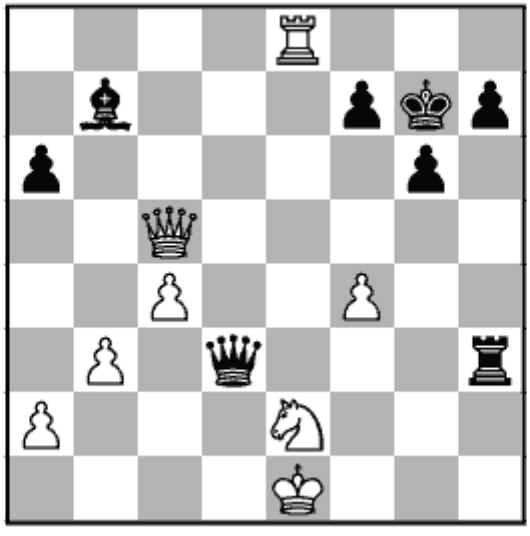
Now 44 Be3 Bxe3 45 Qf6+ Qxf6 46 Nxf6 Kxf6 is an easy win for Black.

44…Ke8 45 Qh7

The game featured 45 Bc1 Qxc1, when White couldn't avoid mate for long.

45…Qg1+ 46 Kg3 Bf2#

back



Solution 101: White to play

Maisuradze – Afraoui (based on)

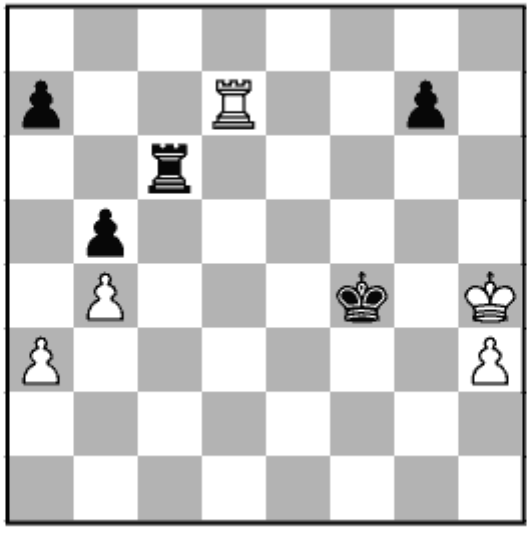
French Team Ch 2019

47 Qf8+! (after 47 Qe5+? Kh6 = White has blown the win) **47…Kf6 48 Qh8+ Kf5 49 Qe5+** (an active queen is an obvious asset in a king-hunt; less effective is 49 Re5+?! Kg4, though White can still win) **49…Kg4 50 Qg5+ Kf3 51 Ng1#**.

back

3: Your Choice

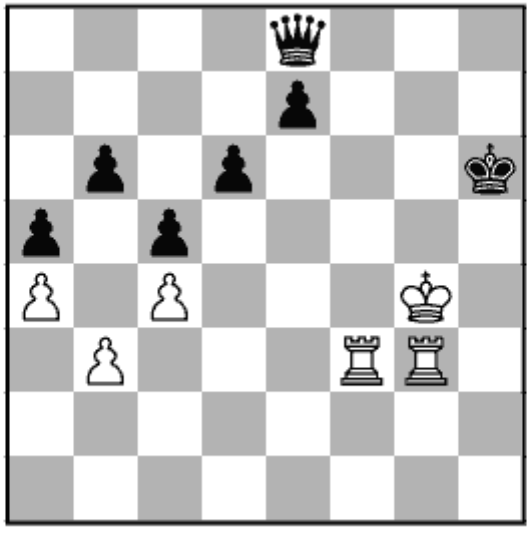
This is the first of two chapters where you are asked to choose between two moves. This is not such an unnatural situation at all: often at the board we can narrow our task down to two logical options, but deciding between them is often where we slip up. Sometimes we can eliminate one of the moves by seeing a reason it fails; then we just need to check that there isn't anything equally bad about our other option. For that reason, even though the difficulty level in this chapter only ranges from 1 up to 3, I have been able to include some positions that would have been much harder without any hint. That's because some of your work has already been done for you, and you don't necessarily need to assess the correct move with such accuracy as normal. This is our largest chapter so far, with 75 puzzles in total.



Puzzle 102: White to play

Choose between 40 Rf7+ and 40 Rd4+.

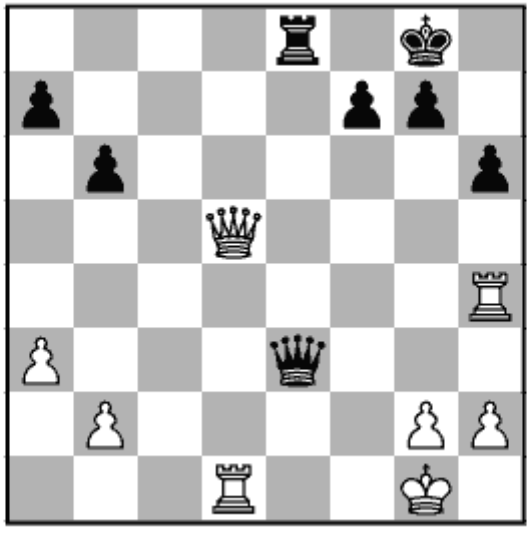
answer



Puzzle 103: White to play

Choose between 72 Rf4 and 72 Kf4.

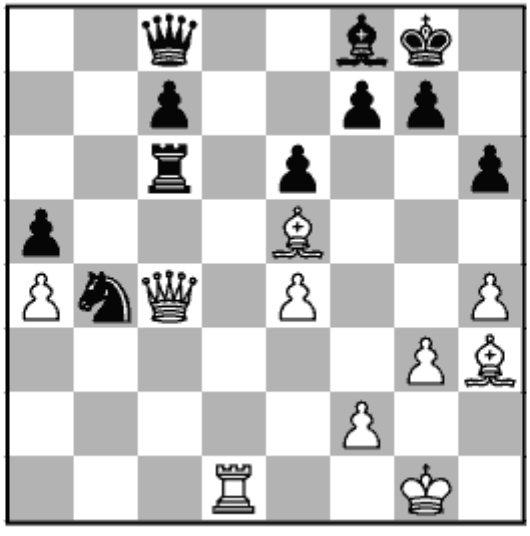
answer



Puzzle 104: White to play

Choose between 28 Kh1 and 28 Kf1.

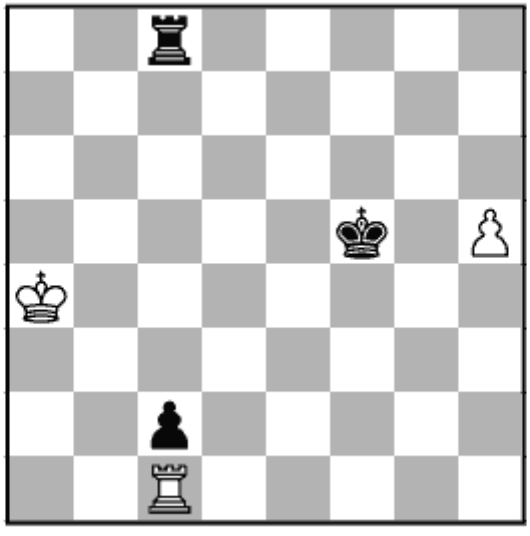
answer



Puzzle 105: White to play

Choose between 35 Qb5 and 35 Qb3.

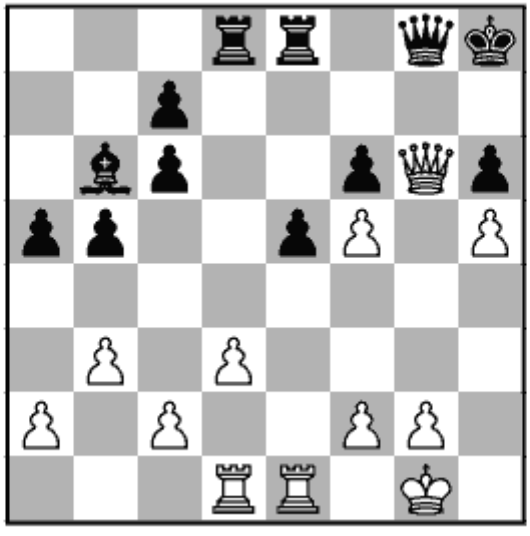
answer



Puzzle 106: Black to play

Choose between 74…Ke4 and 74…Kg5.

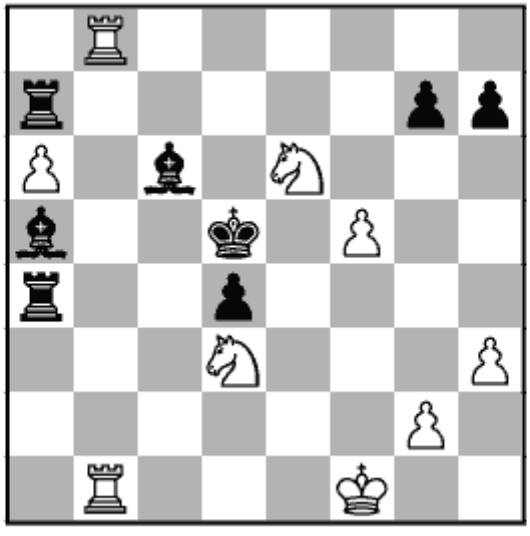
answer



Puzzle 107: White to play

Choose between 25 Qxh6+ and 25 Qxf6+.

answer



Puzzle 108: Black to play

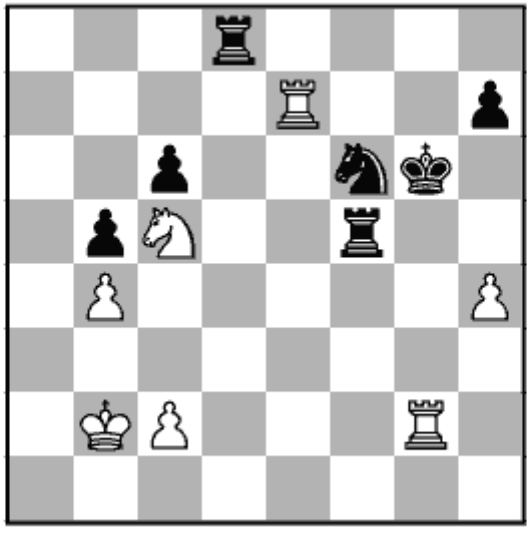
Choose between 42…Rxa6 and 42…Ra3.

answer

Puzzle 109: Black to play

Choose between 15…Bxc5 and 15…Nxc5.

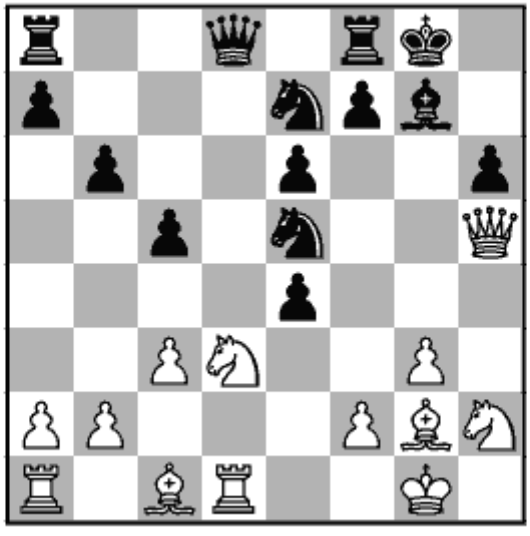
answer



Puzzle 110: Black to play

Choose between 42…Kh6 and 42…Kh5.

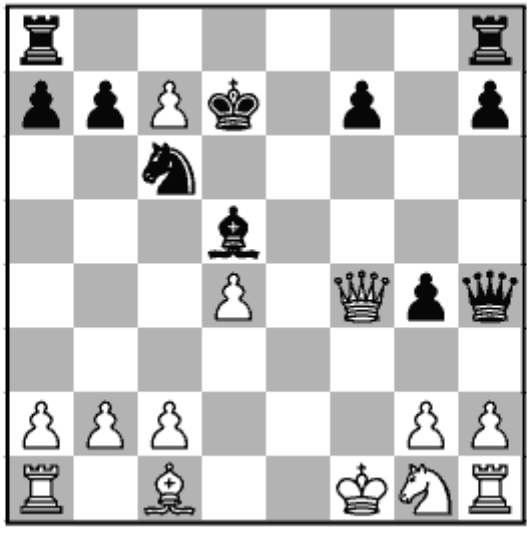
answer



Puzzle 111: Black to play

Choose between 17…Nxd3 and 17…exd3.

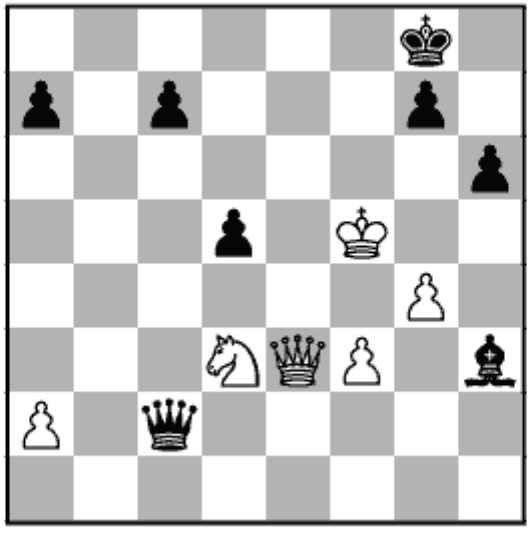
answer



Puzzle 112: White to play

Choose between 14 Ne2 and 14 Nf3.

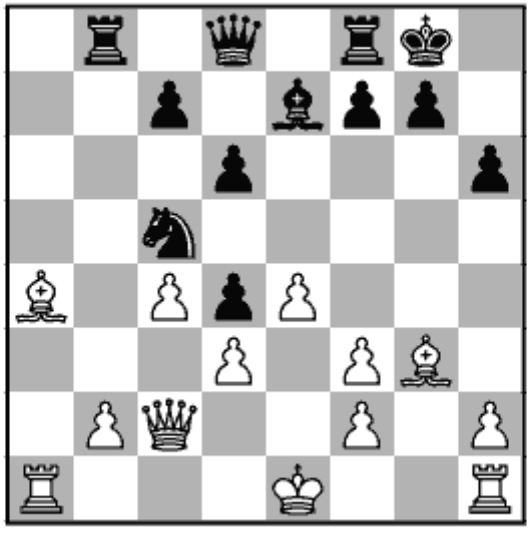
answer



Puzzle 113: Black to play

Choose between 33…Kh7 and 33…Bf1.

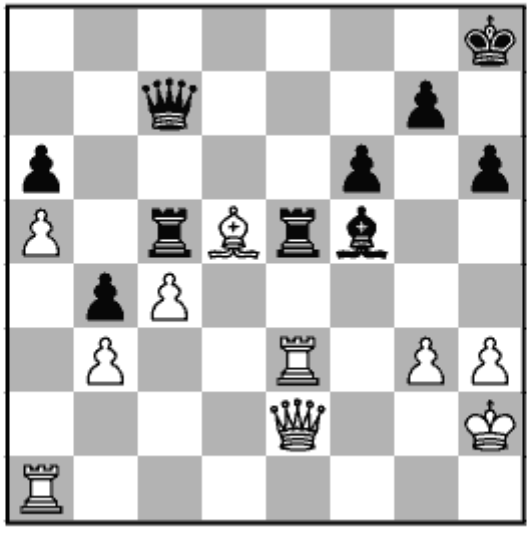
answer



Puzzle 114: White to play

Choose between 19 Bb5 and 19 Bc6.

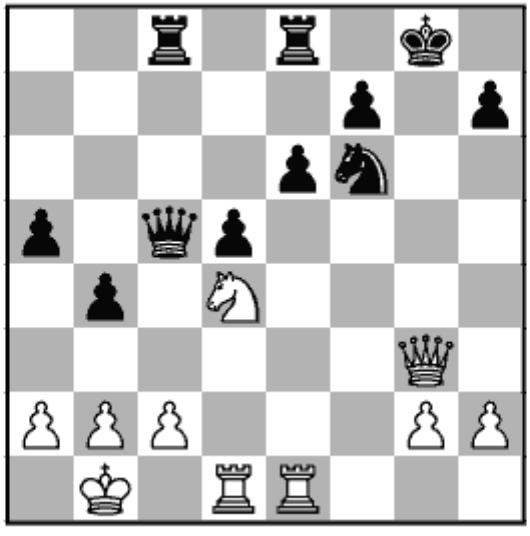
answer



Puzzle 115: White to play

Choose between 45 Re1 and 45 Rxe5.

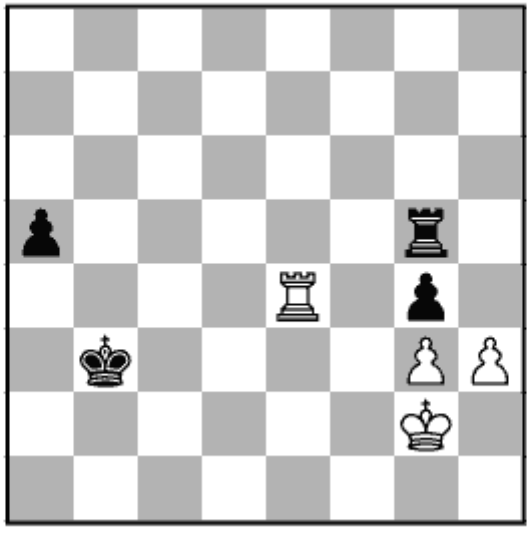
answer



Puzzle 116: Black to play

Choose between 24…Kf8 and 24…Kh8.

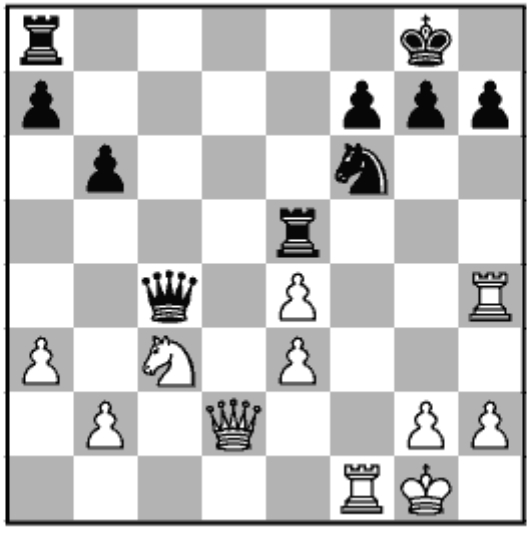
answer



Puzzle 117: White to play

Choose between 59 Re3+ and 59 Rxg4.

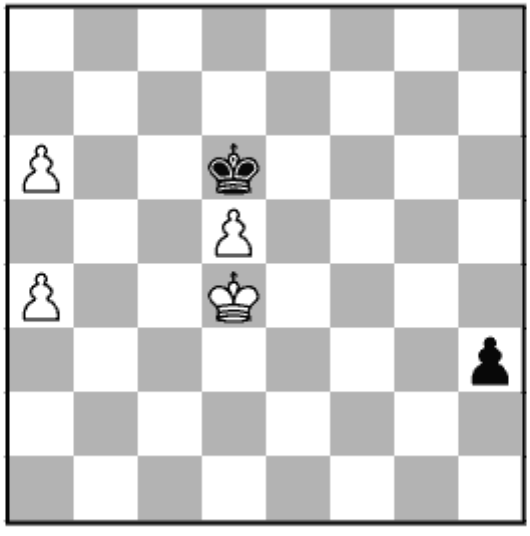
answer



Puzzle 118: Black to play

Choose between 22…Rae8 and 22…Nxe4.

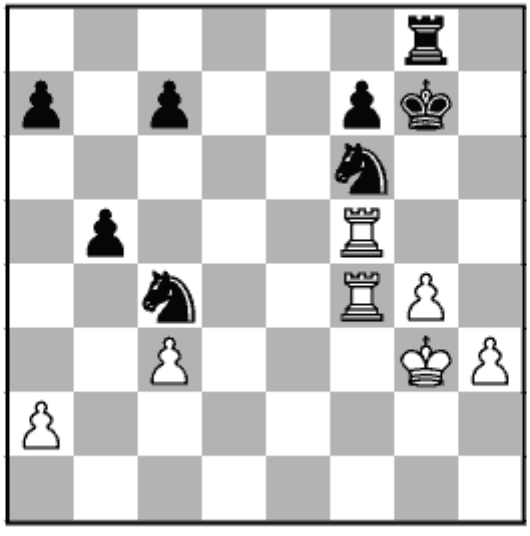
answer



Puzzle 119: Black to play

Choose between 48…h2 and 48…Kc7.

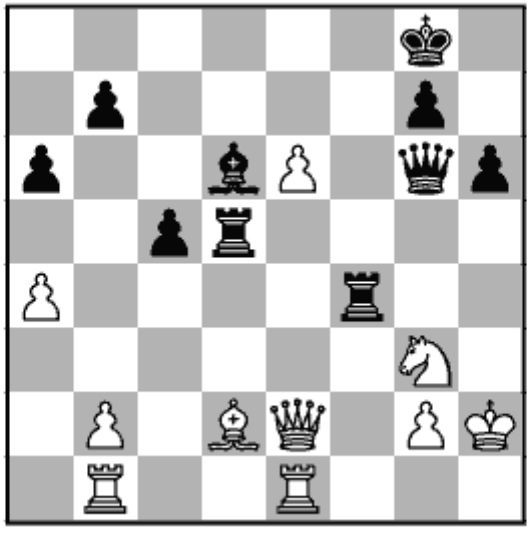
answer



Puzzle 120: Black to play

Choose between 1…Nd6 and 1…Nd2.

answer



Puzzle 121: White to play

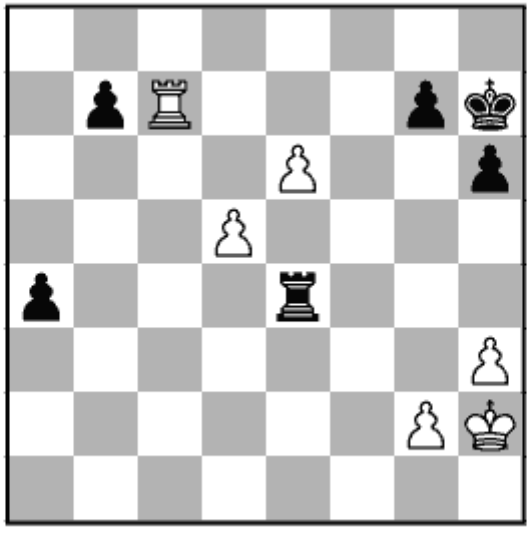
Choose between 27 e7 and 27 Bxf4.

answer

Puzzle 122: White to play

Choose between 17 Qc2 and 17 Qb3.

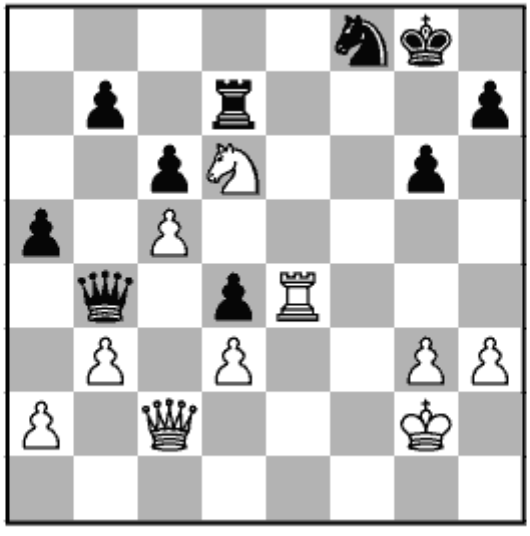
answer



Puzzle 123: Black to play

Choose between 40…a3 and 40…b5.

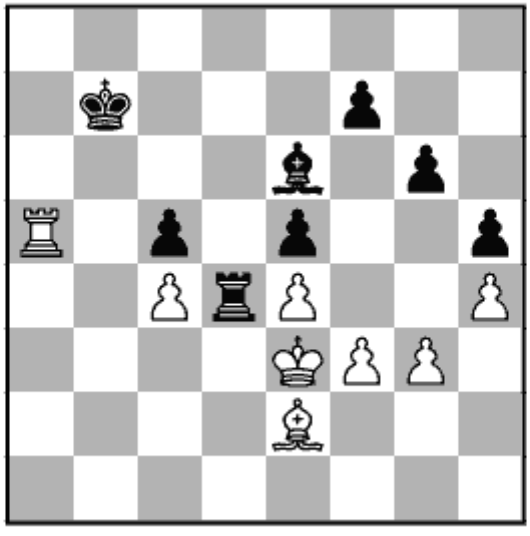
answer



Puzzle 124: Black to play

Choose between 35…b6 and 35…Qc3.

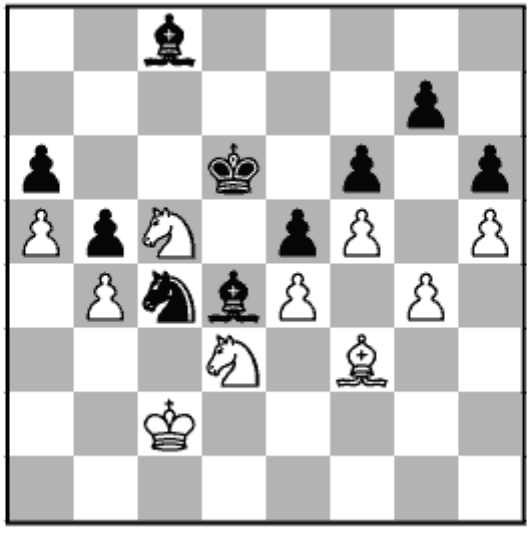
answer



Puzzle 125: Black to play

Choose between 58…Kb6 and 58…Bxc4.

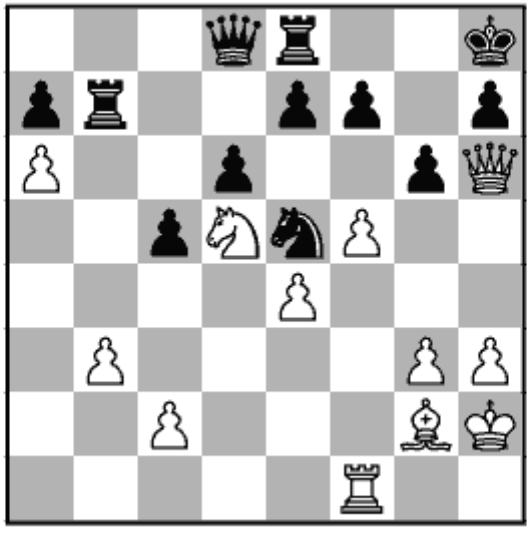
answer



Puzzle 126: White to play

Choose between 40 Be2 and 40 Nb3.

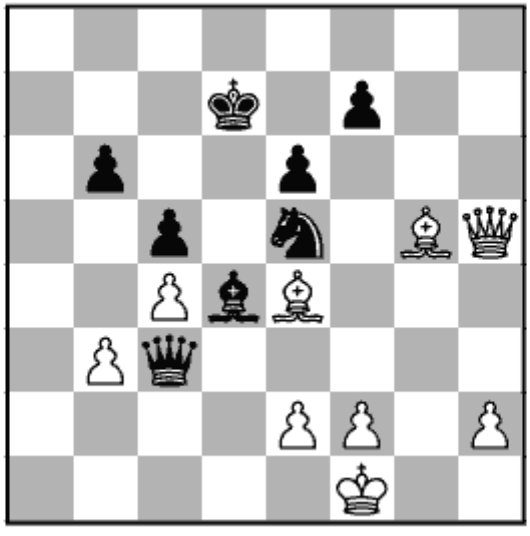
answer



Puzzle 127: Black to play

Choose between 32…Rb8 and 32…Rd7.

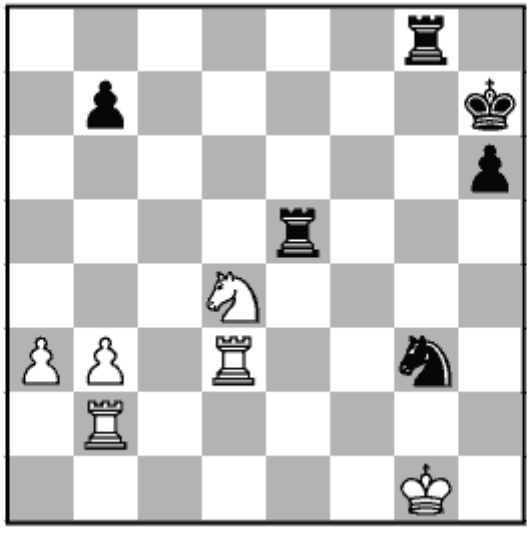
answer



Puzzle 128: Black to play

Choose between 34…Qa1+ and 34…Qxb3.

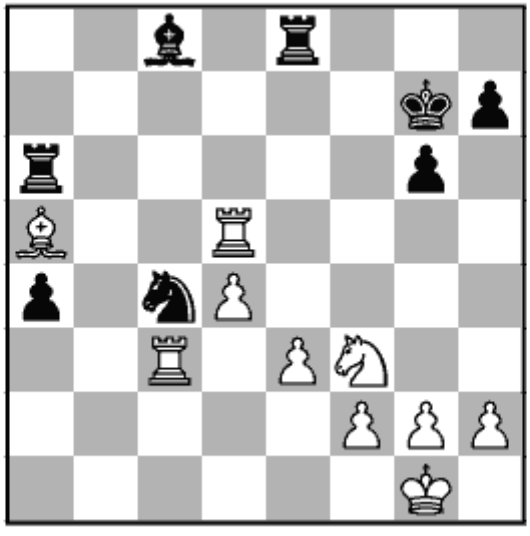
answer



Puzzle 129: Black to play

Choose between 40…Nf5+ and 40…Ne2++.

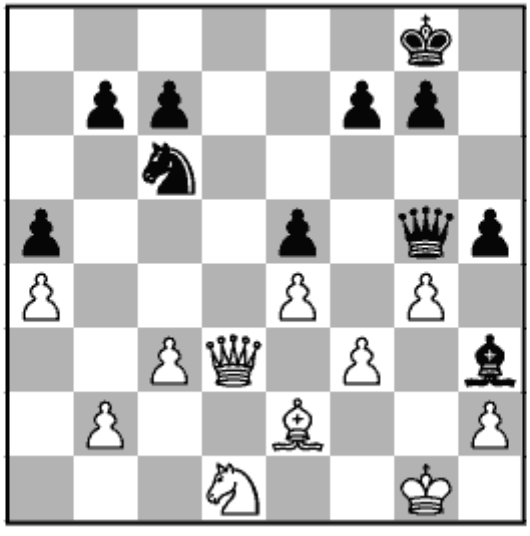
answer



Puzzle 130: Black to play

Choose between 34…Rxa5 and 34…Nxa5.

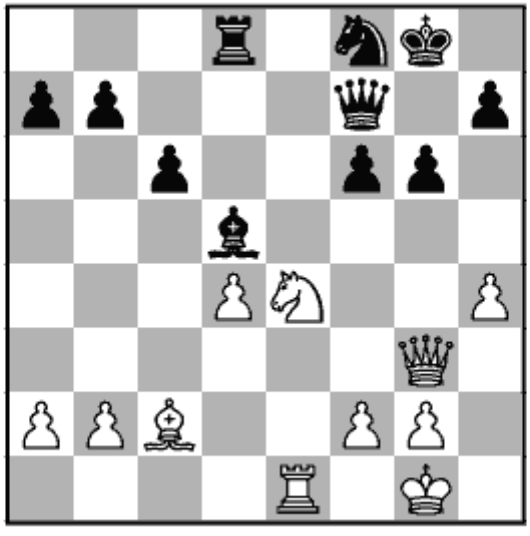
answer



Puzzle 131: Black to play

Choose between 28…hxg4 and 28…Qc1.

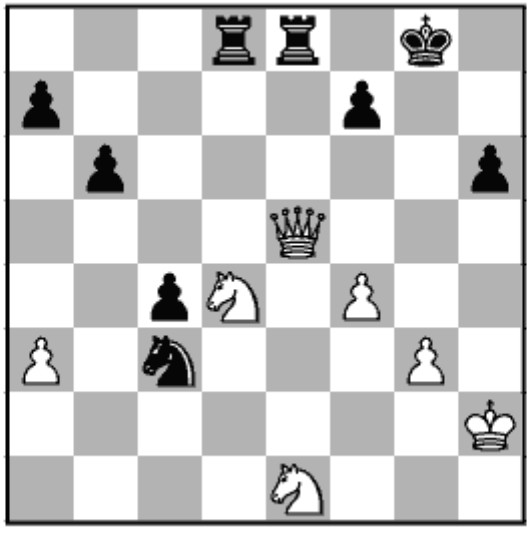
answer



Puzzle 132: Black to play

Choose between 24…Ne6 and 24…Kg7.

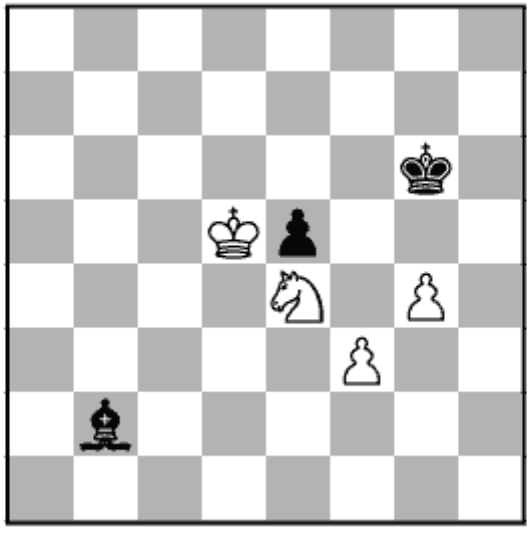
answer



Puzzle 133: White to play

Choose between 31 Ne6 and 31 Qf6.

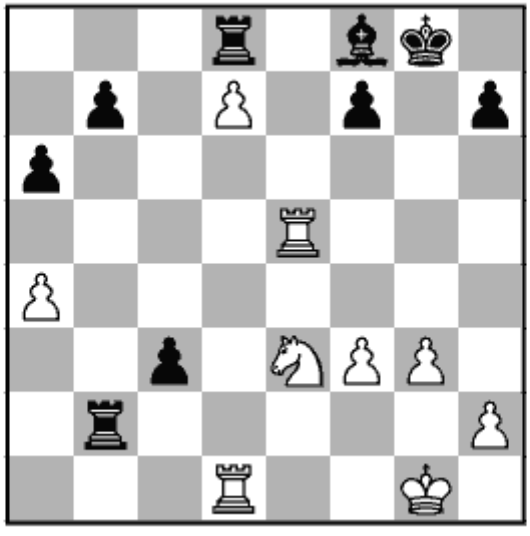
answer



Puzzle 134: Black to play

Choose between 48…Ba1 and 48…Kf7.

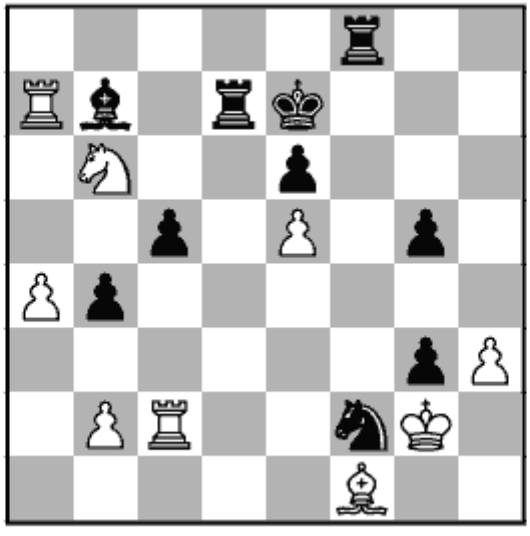
answer



Puzzle 135: Black to play

Choose between 30…c2 and 30…Re2.

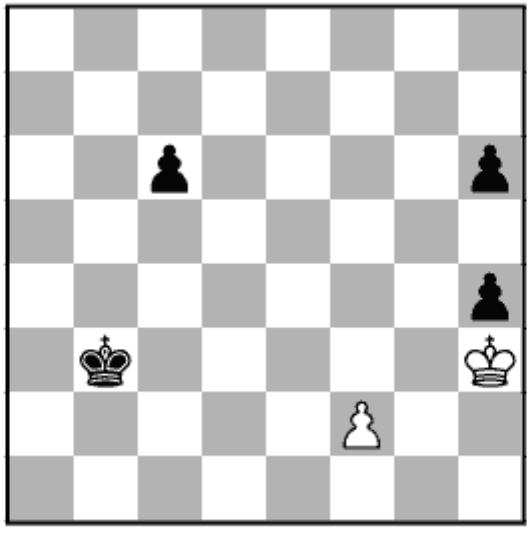
answer



Puzzle 136: White to play

Choose between 38 Kg1 and 38 Kxg3.

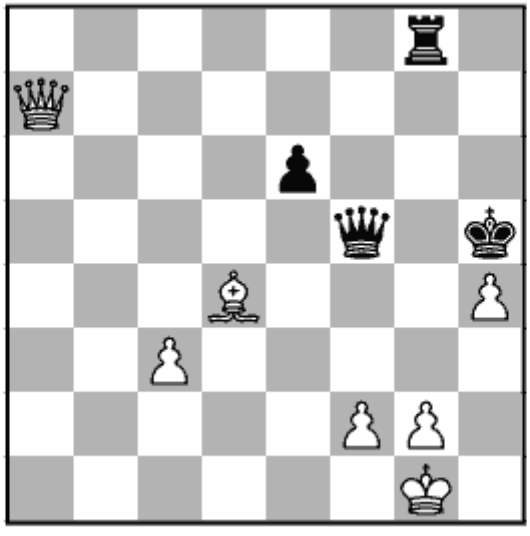
answer



Puzzle 137: White to play

Choose between 53 f4 and 53 Kxh4.

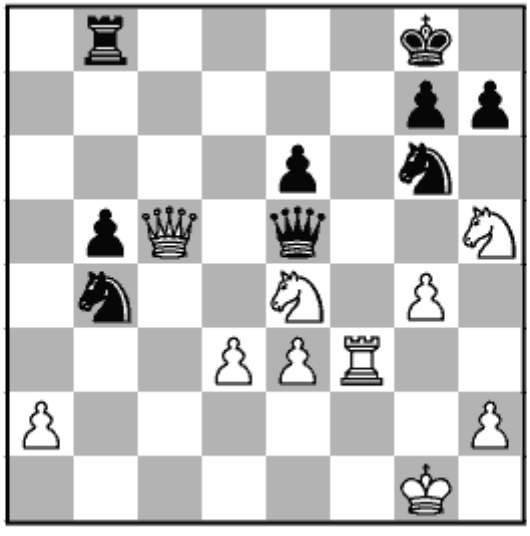
answer



Puzzle 138: White to play

Choose between 37 Qc7 and 37 Qe7.

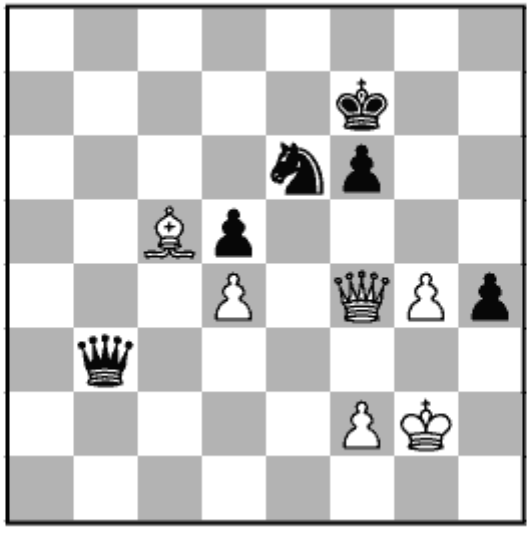
answer



Puzzle 139: Black to play

Choose between 31…Nxd3 and 31…Qxc5.

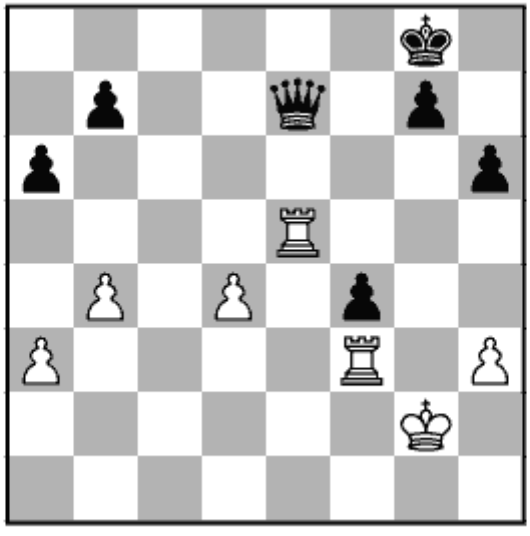
answer



Puzzle 140: White to play

Choose between 56 Qf5 and 56 Qd6.

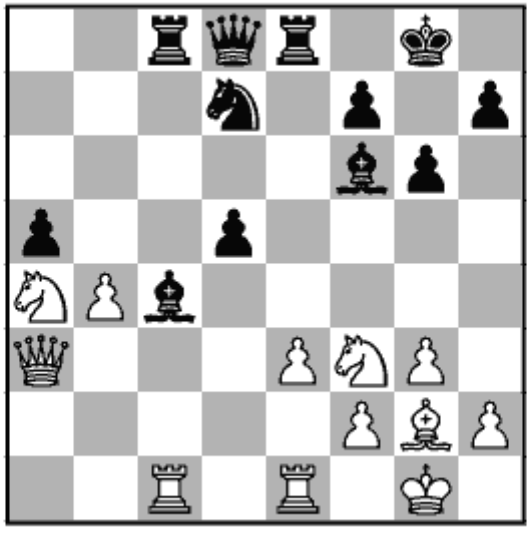
answer



Puzzle 141: Black to play

Choose between 43…Qf6 and 43…Qf7.

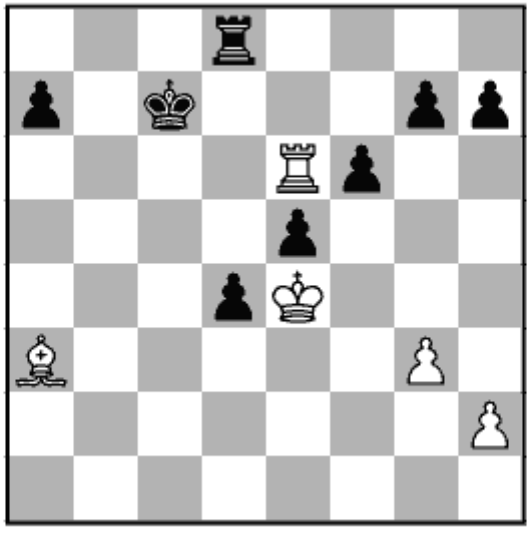
answer



Puzzle 142: White to play

Choose between 23 bxa5 and 23 b5.

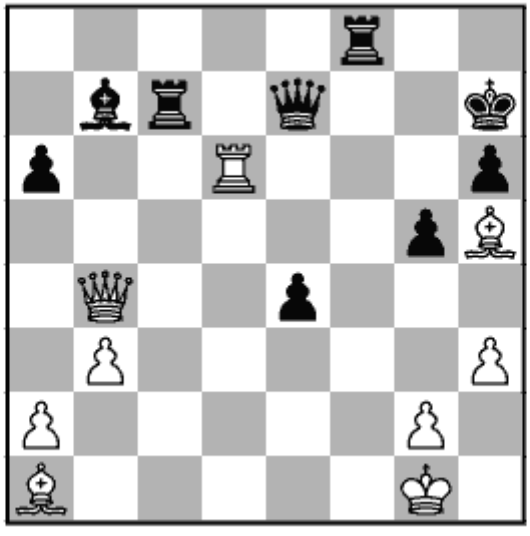
answer



Puzzle 143: White to play

Choose between 36 Re7+ and 36 Bb4.

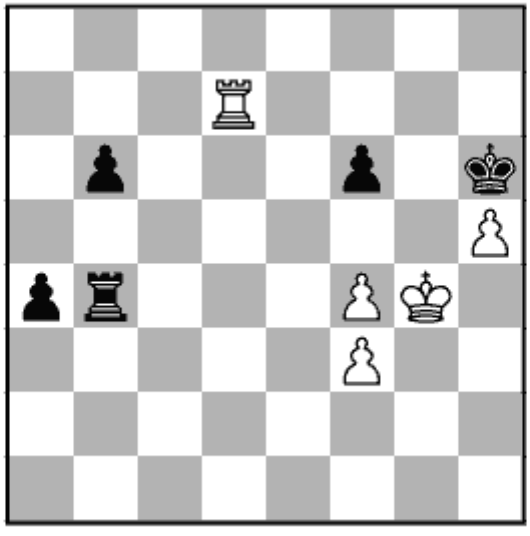
answer



Puzzle 144: White to play

Choose between 35 Qb6 and 35 Qd4.

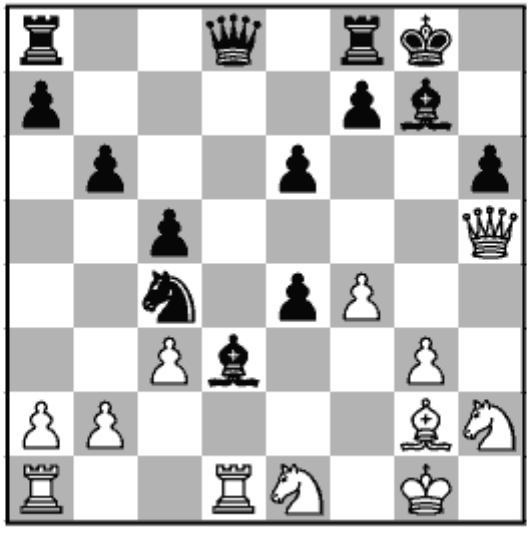
answer



Puzzle 145: White to play

Choose between 49 Rf7 and 49 Ra7.

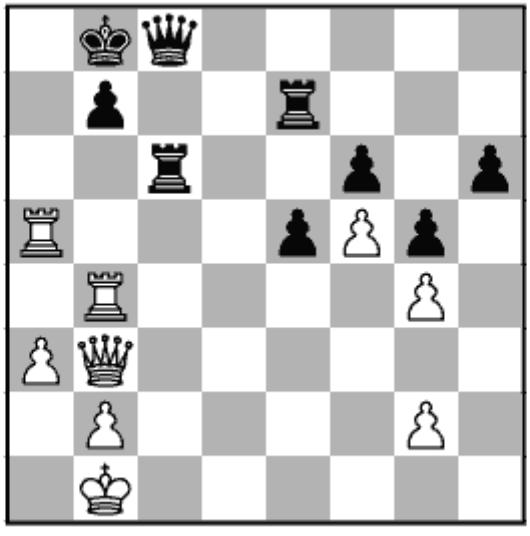
answer



Puzzle 146: White to play

Choose between 20 Nxd3 and 20 Bxe4.

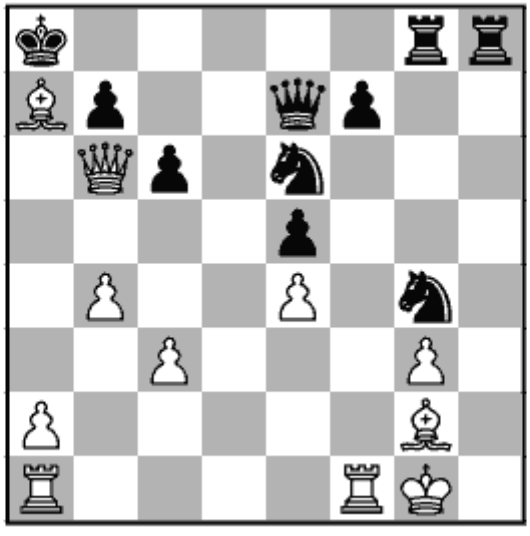
answer



Puzzle 147: White to play

Choose between 35 Qa4 and 35 Rba4.

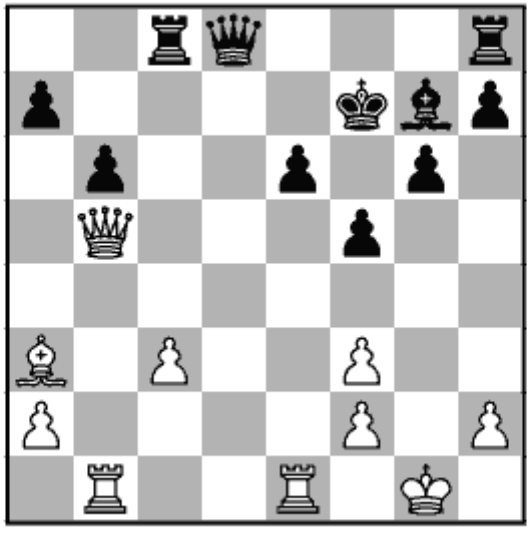
answer



Puzzle 148: Black to play

Choose between 24…Nc7 and 24…Nf4.

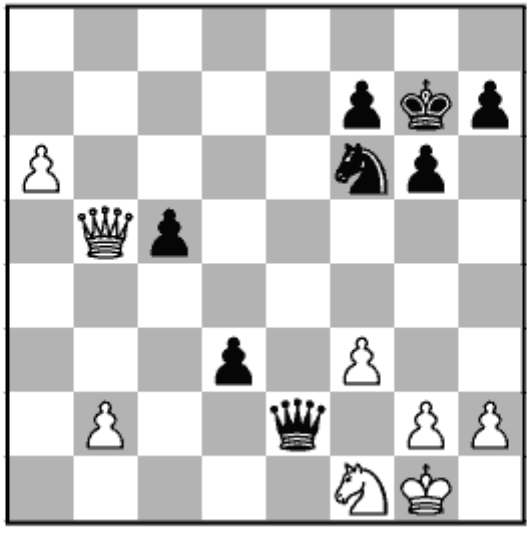
answer



Puzzle 149: White to play

Choose between 26 Rbd1 and 26 Rxe6.

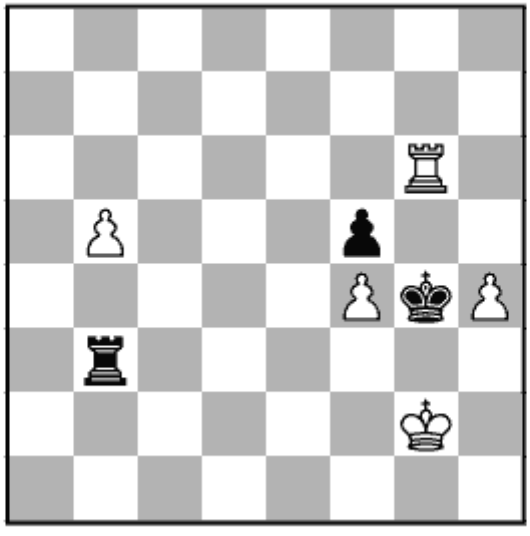
answer



Puzzle 150: Black to play

Choose between 29…Qc2 and 29…Qe5.

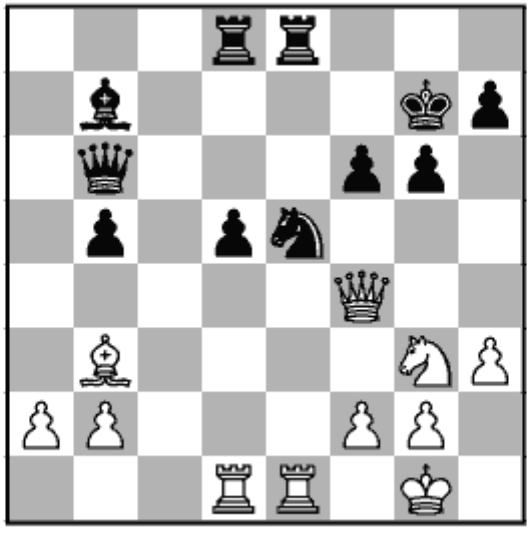
answer



Puzzle 151: Black to play

Choose between 47…Kxh4 and 47…Kxf4.

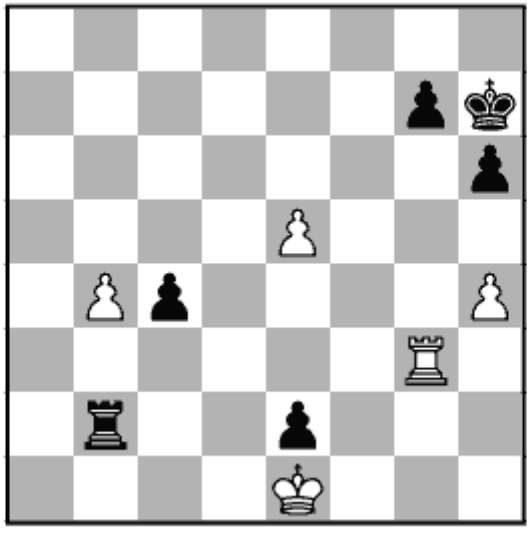
answer



Puzzle 152: Black to play

Choose between 30…Nd3 and 30…d4.

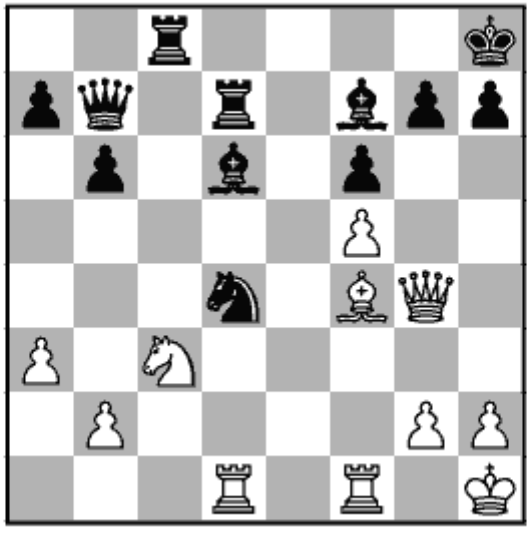
answer



Puzzle 153: White to play

Choose between 56 e6 and 56 Re3.

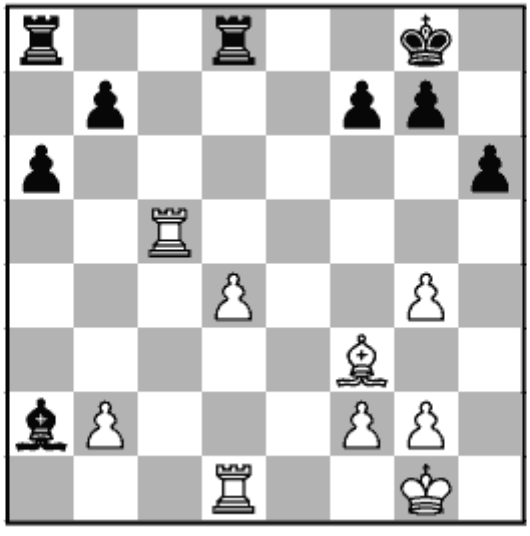
answer



Puzzle 154: White to play

Choose between 32 Rxd4 and 32 Bxd6.

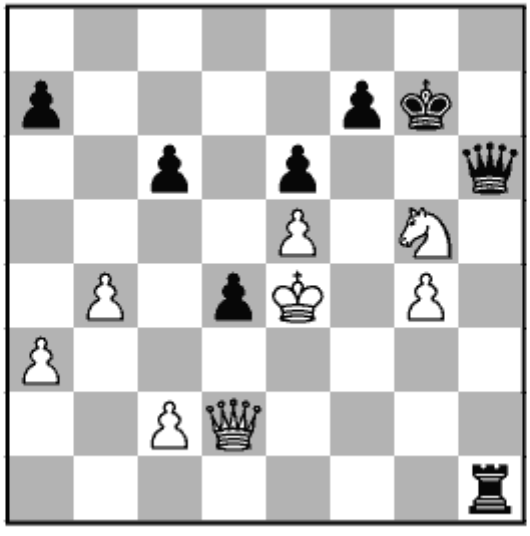
answer



Puzzle 155: Black to play

Choose between 27…Rab8 and 27…Rd7.

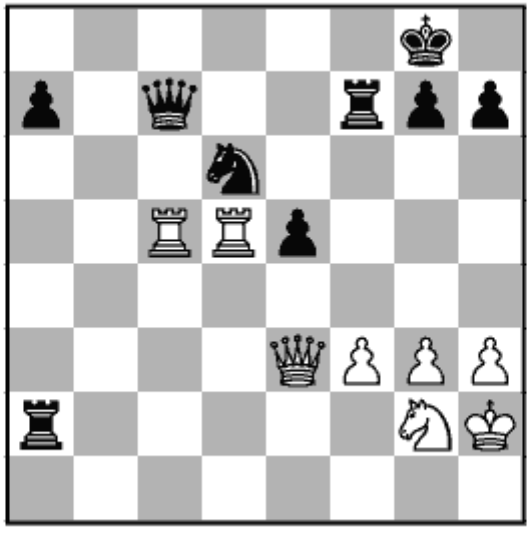
answer



Puzzle 156: Black to play

Choose between 52…Qh2 and 52…Qh4.

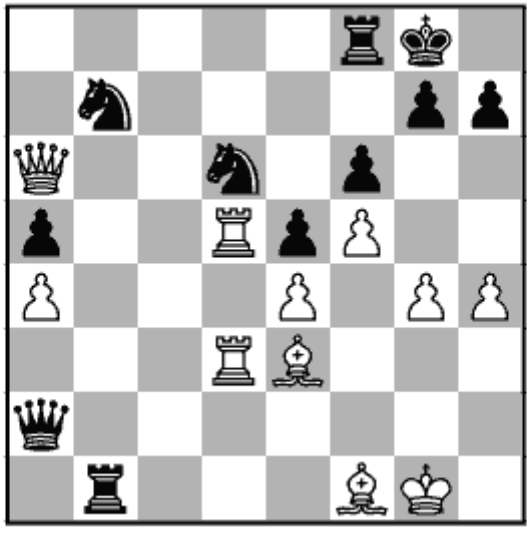
answer



Puzzle 157: Black to play

Choose between 37…Qd7 and 37…Qe7.

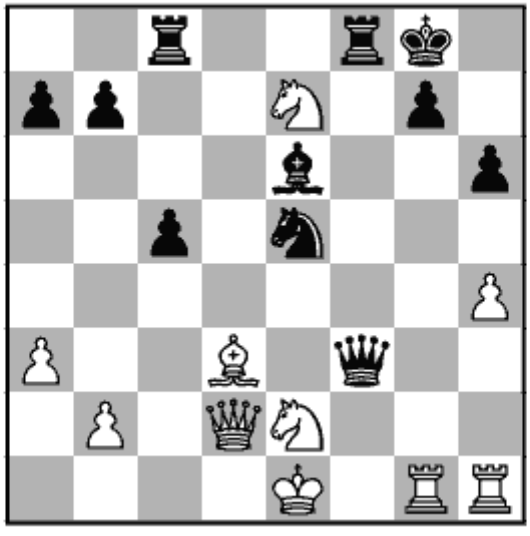
answer



Puzzle 158: White to play

Choose between 40 Rd2 and 40 Rxd6.

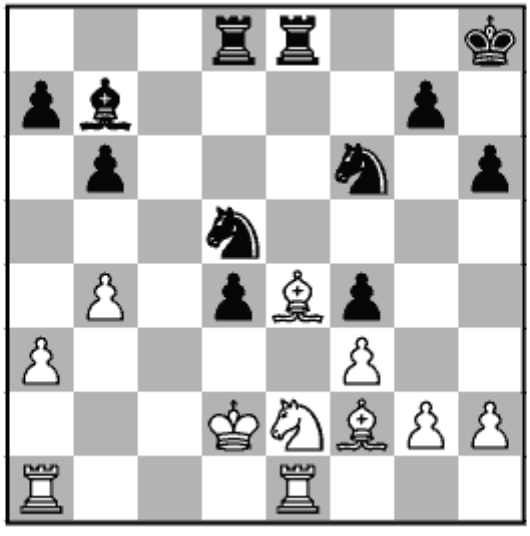
answer



Puzzle 159: Black to play

Choose between 24…Kh8 and 24…Kf7.

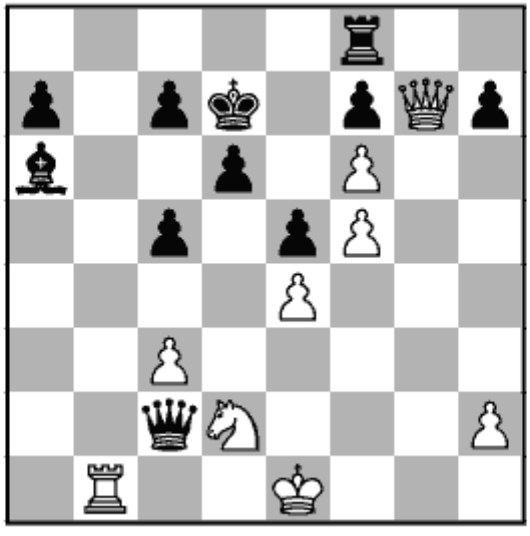
answer



Puzzle 160: White to play

Choose between 26 Bxd5 and 26 Bd3.

answer



Puzzle 161: Black to play

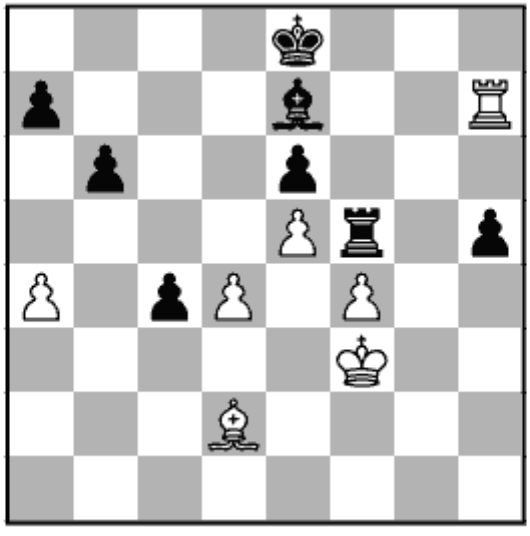
Choose between 26…Qd3 and 26…Qxc3.

answer

Puzzle 162: Black to play

Choose between 21…Nxd5 and 21…g4.

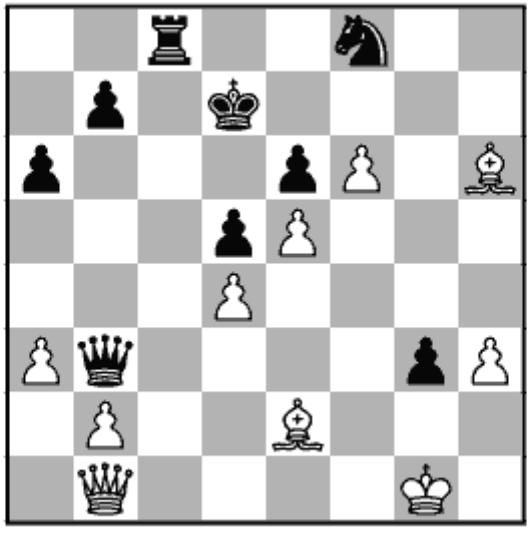
answer



Puzzle 163: White to play

Choose between 49 Rh8+ and 49 Ke4.

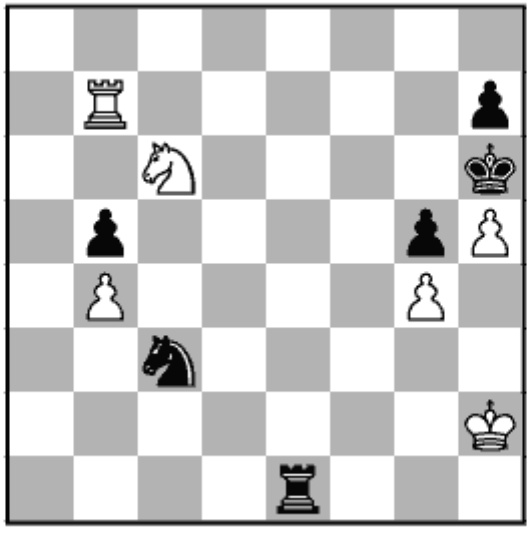
answer



Puzzle 164: White to play

Choose between 42 Bd1 and 42 Bd3.

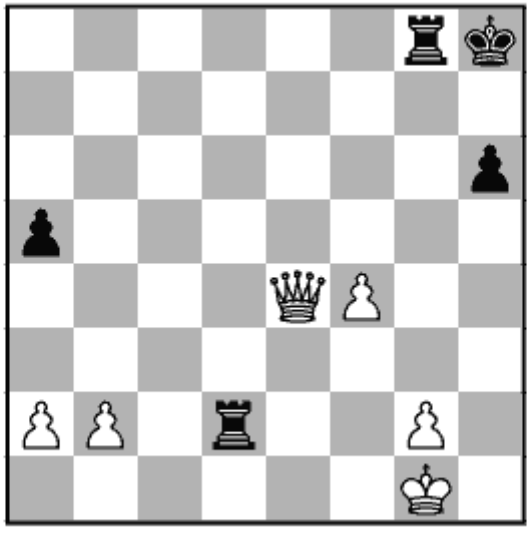
answer



Puzzle 165: Black to play

Choose between 46…Re2+ and 46…Re4.

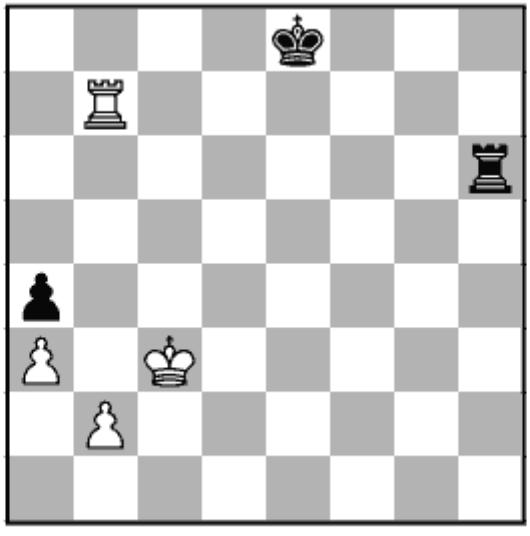
answer



Puzzle 166: White to play

Choose between 41 Kh2 and 41 Kf1.

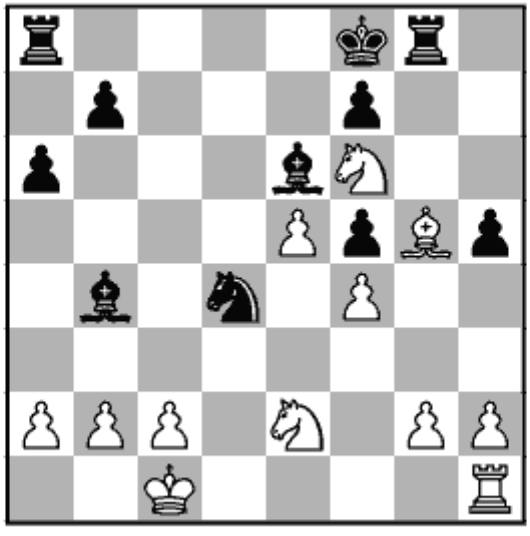
answer



Puzzle 167: White to play

Choose between 75 Kb4 and 75 Rb4.

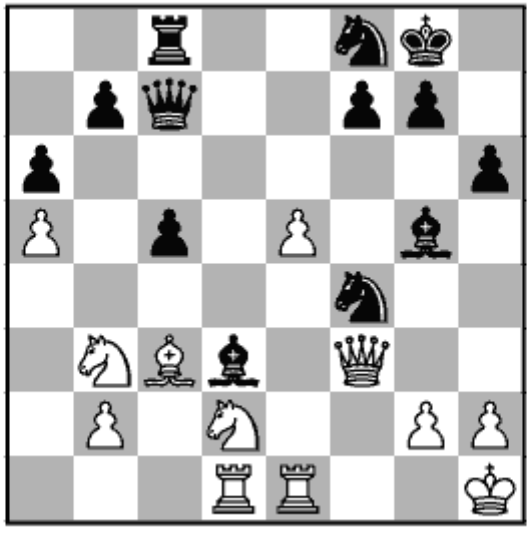
answer



Puzzle 168: White to play

Choose between 18 Nxd4 and 18 Bh6+.

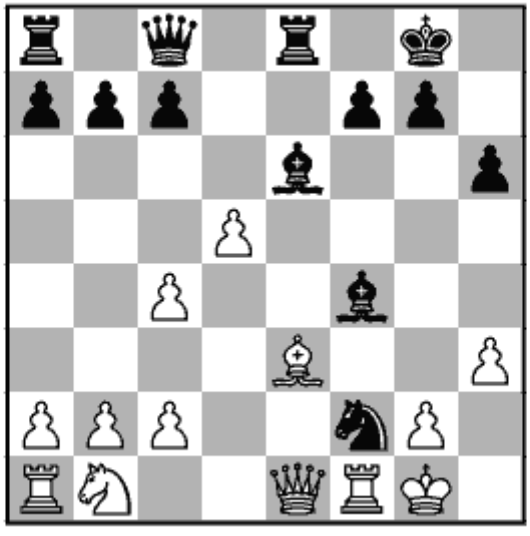
answer



Puzzle 169: Black to play

Choose between 26…N8e6 and 26…Bc2.

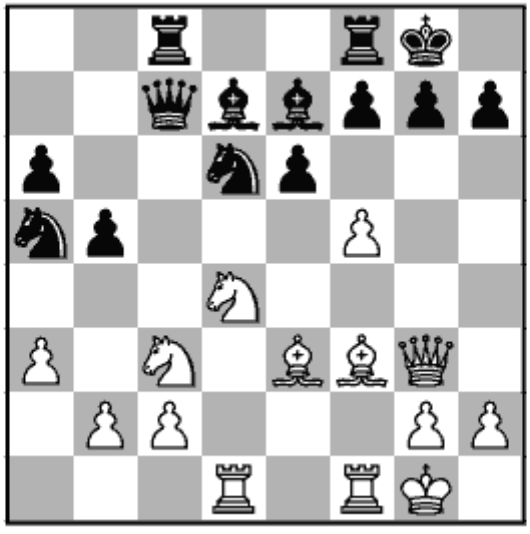
answer



Puzzle 170: White to play

Choose between 22 Qxf2 and 22 Bxf4.

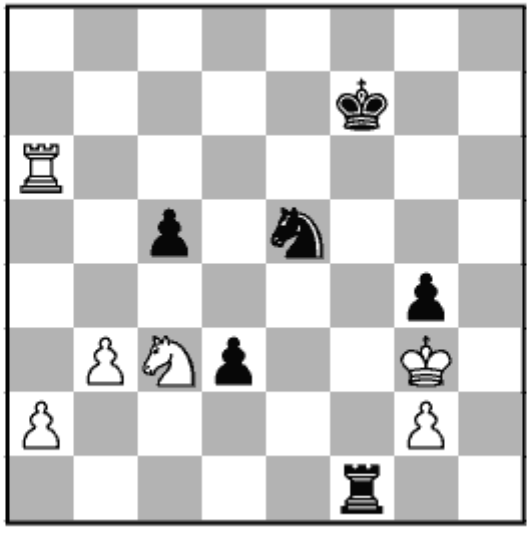
answer



Puzzle 171: Black to play

Choose between 17…Nac4 and 17…Ndc4.

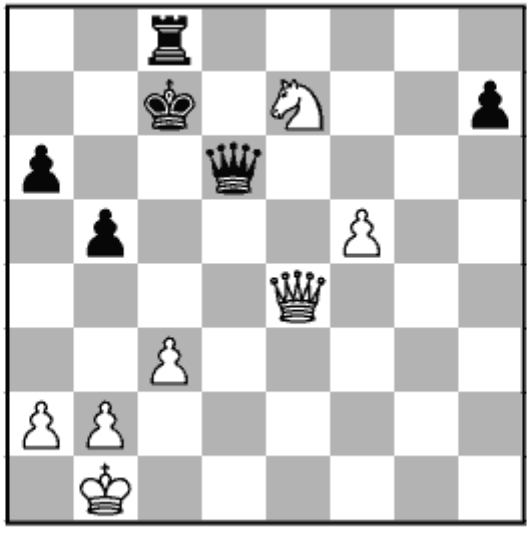
answer



Puzzle 172: White to play

Choose between 49 Rd6 and 49 Ne4.

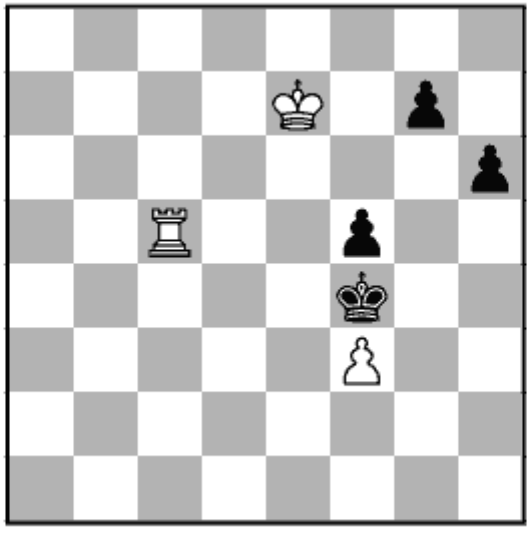
answer



Puzzle 173: White to play

Choose between 39 Nd5+ and 39 a3.

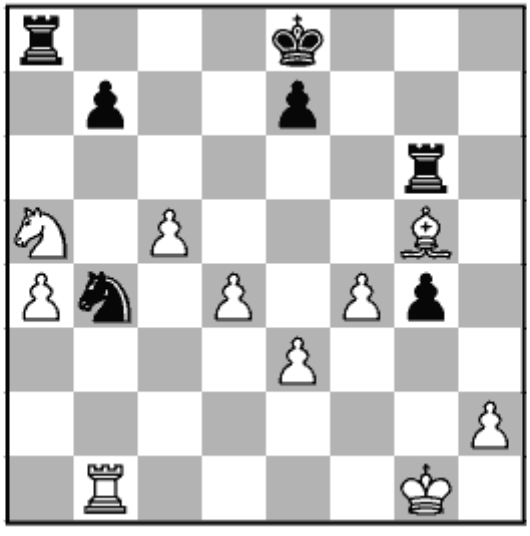
answer



Puzzle 174: Black to play

Choose between 74…h5 and 74…Kxf3.

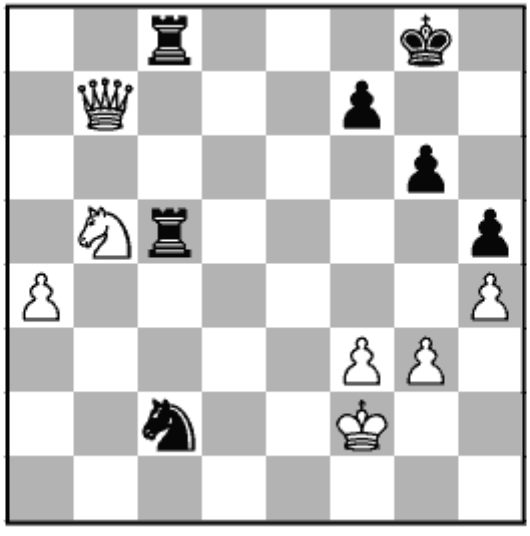
answer



Puzzle 175: Black to play

Choose between 37…Nc2 and 37…Nd5.

answer

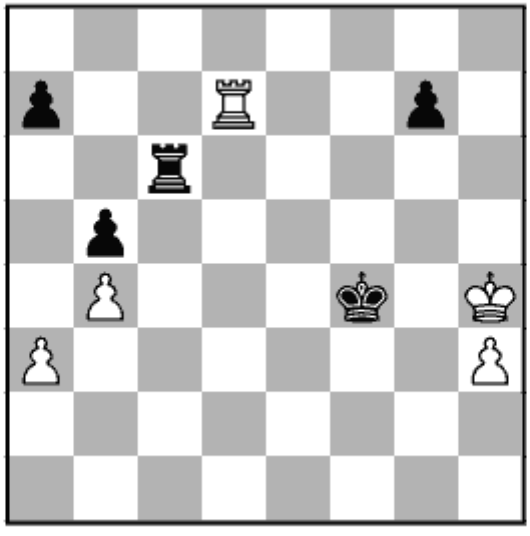


Puzzle 176: Black to play

Choose between 45…Nb4 and 45…Rf8.

answer

Solutions for Chapter 3



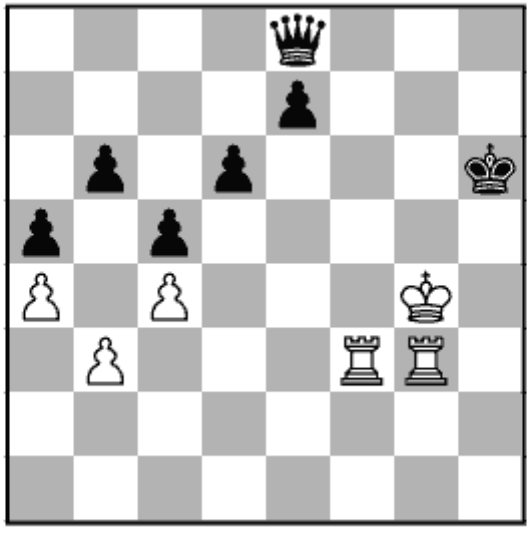
Solution 102: White to play

Gorshtein – Unuk

Stockholm 2018/19

In the game, White went wrong with 40 Rf7+? Rf6 –+, when he was forced to exchange on f6 (to avoid 41…Rh6#), with a hopeless pawn ending. Instead **40 Rd4+! Ke5 41 Rd7** keeps the game level.

back



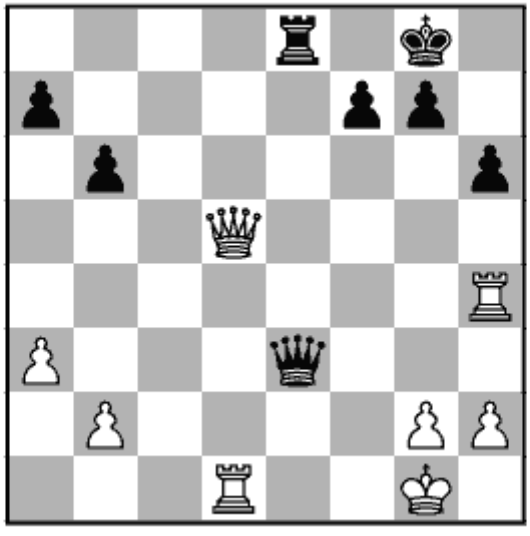
Solution 103: White to play

Gurtovoi – Deriabin (variation)

Russian Team Ch, Sochi 2019

The rook move allows mate (72 Rf4?? Qh5#), so White must settle for a draw by **72 Kf4 Qf7+ 73 Ke3 Qe6+**, etc.

back



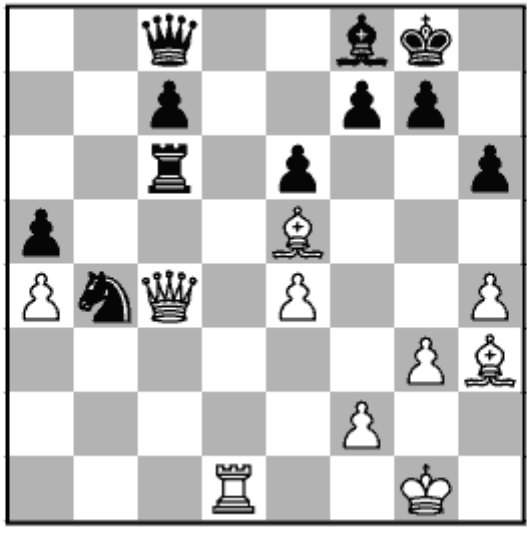
Solution 104: White to play

Moreno Ruiz – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

White must be alert to mating ideas on his back rank. **28 Kf1** (not 28 Kh1?? Qe1+ 29 Rxe1 Rxe1#) **28…Qe2+ 29 Kg1 Qe3+ 30 Kf1 Qe2+ ½-½**.

back



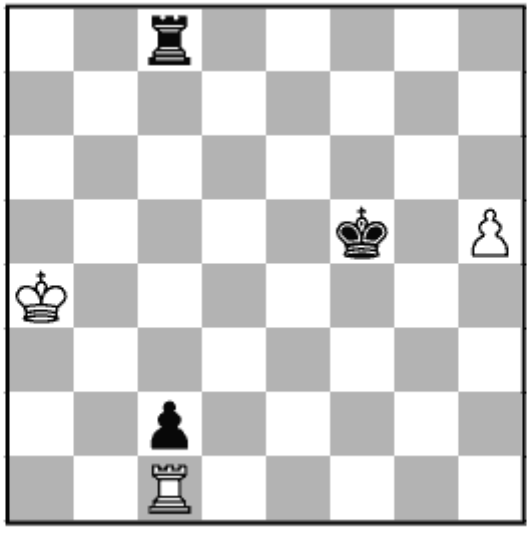
Solution 105: White to play

Sipos – Kravtsiv

Pardubice rapid 2012

The wrong choice here costs White his bishop. **35 Qb3** (the game featured 35 Qb5? Rc5 –+) **35…Rc2 36 Bc3 c5 37 Bf1** =+ with just a slight advantage for Black.

back



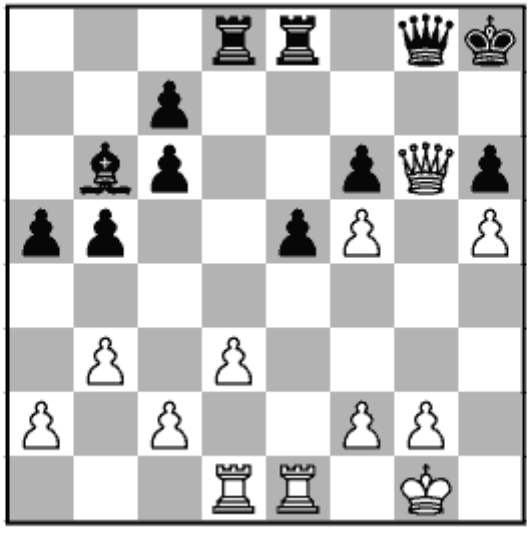
Solution 106: Black to play

Narciso Dublan – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

Black can win by first protecting and then queening his pawn: **74…Ke4!** (Black shouldn't settle for a simple draw with 74… Kg5? 75 Kb3 =) **75 h6 Kd3 76 h7 Kd2 0-1**.

back



Solution 107: White to play

Malakhov – Kravtsiv

Pardubice rapid 2012

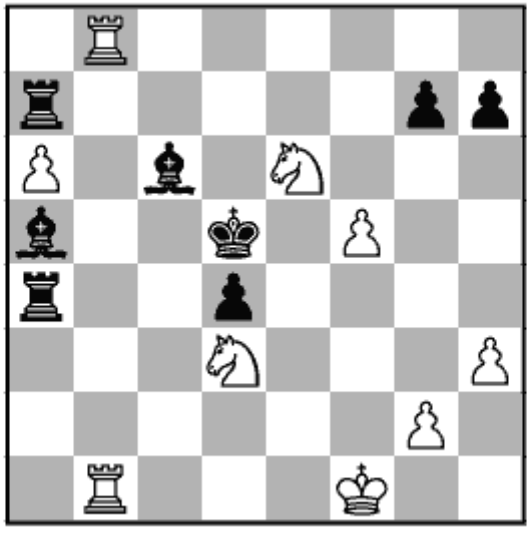
25 Qxh6+

White takes on h6 first because after 25 Qxf6+? Qg7 the queen defends the h6-pawn, and 26 Qxc6 Rg8 is winning for Black.

25…Qh7 26 Qxf6+ Qg7 27 Qxg7+!?

Black will have just a minimal advantage in the endgame. This is better than 27 Qxc6?! (as played in the game) 27…Qg5 –/+.

back



Solution 108: Black to play

Kravtsiv – Mithil

Chennai 2012

The immediate capture on a6 costs Black the exchange, so the right move is **42…Ra3!** (the game featured 42…Rxa6? 43 Nec5 Ra7 44 Nxa4 +– with a decisive advantage) **43 Nb4+** (43 Ndc5 d3 and 43 Nec5 Rc3 are both unclear) **43…Bxb4 44 R8xb4 R3xa6** and Black should hold the draw without much difficulty.

back

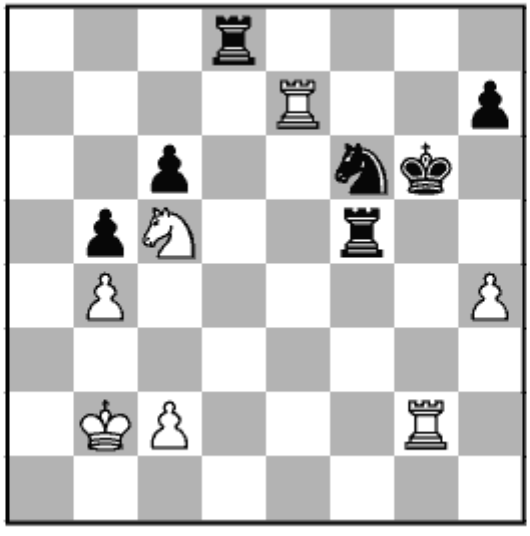
Solution 109: Black to play

Stella – Kravtsiv

Livigno 2012

Black should take with the knight so that the bishop can come to f6 to attack the a1-rook when White plays b4: **15…Nxc5** (after 15…Bxc5? 16 b4 +– Black loses a piece) **16 b4 Bf6 17 Nc3** with a roughly equal position.

back



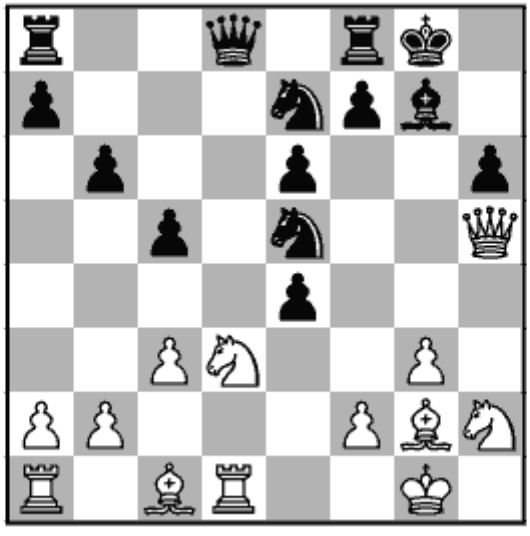
Solution 110: Black to play

Kravtsiv – Zakhartsov

Pardubice rapid 2012

If the king goes to h5, it soon falls victim to a knight fork: 42…Kh5? 43 Ne6 (43 Ne4!? +–) 43…Rdd5 44 Ng7+ +–. After the correct **42…Kh6 43 Re6** (as played in the game) **43…Kh5 44 Rxc6 Rd4 +=** Black should hold the position with some care.

back



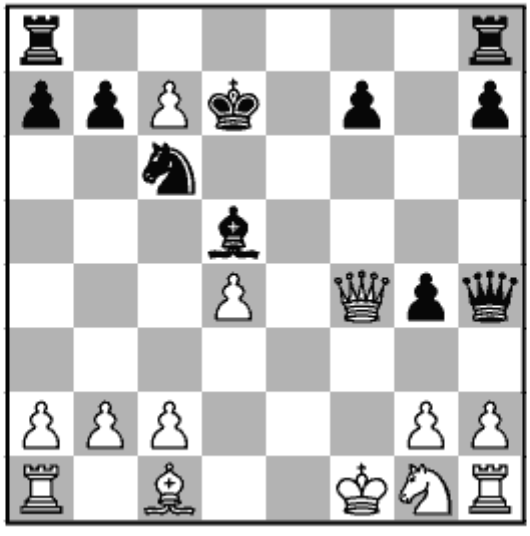
Solution 111: Black to play

Kravtsiv – C.Toth (variation)

Chennai 2012

Black should give up the exchange rather than drop his knight into a deadly pin: **17…exd3** (after 17…Nxd3? 18 Bxe4 c4 both 19 Ng4!? +– and 19 Bxh6 +– give White a decisive advantage) **18 Bxa8 Qxa8 19 f4** (19 Bxh6 N7g6 is unclear) **19…Nc4** with fair compensation for the exchange. Maybe Black is objectively a little worse, but his game is very playable.

back



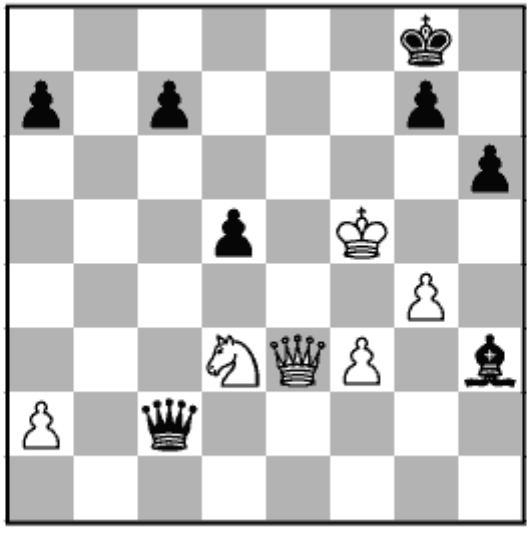
Solution 112: White to play

D.Mackenzie – T.Coleman

Burlingame 2019

In the game White played 14 Nf3?? and resigned without waiting for 14…gxf3!, when instead of winning, White loses: 15 Qxh4 (15 Qf5+ Be6 –+) 15…fxg2+ –+. Instead **14 Ne2 Rae8 15 Qf5+ Be6 16 Qf2** gives White a decisive advantage.

back



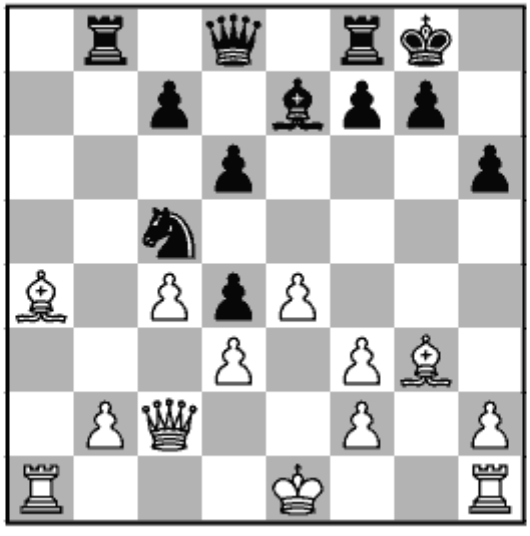
Solution 113: Black to play

Lavendelis – Kravtsiv

Al Ain tt 2012

33…Bf1? is wrong because it allows perpetual check: 34 Qe8+ (or 34 Qe6+ Kf8 35 Qc8+ =) 34…Kh7 35 Qg6+ =. Black can win with **33…Kh7 34 Ke5 Bf1** –+.

back



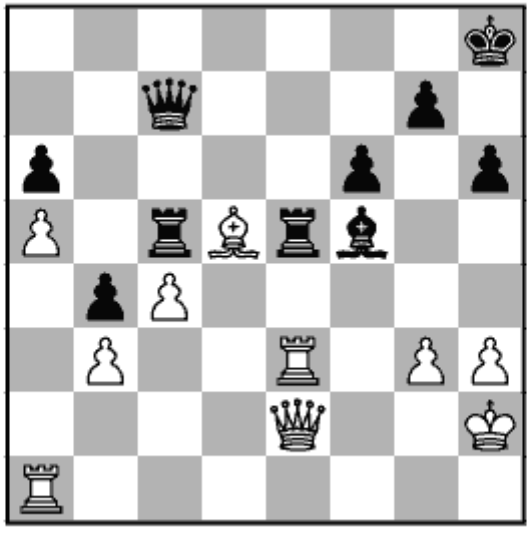
Solution 114: White to play

Bruziks – Kravtsiv

Altenkirchen 2012

White needs to spot Black's threat to take on b2. In the game, 19 Bc6? Rxb2 20 Qd1 Qb8 gave Black a decisive advantage, as White's pieces are badly placed and he has a weak pawn on d3. After **19 Bb5 c6 20 b4!** he has a playable and roughly equal position.

back



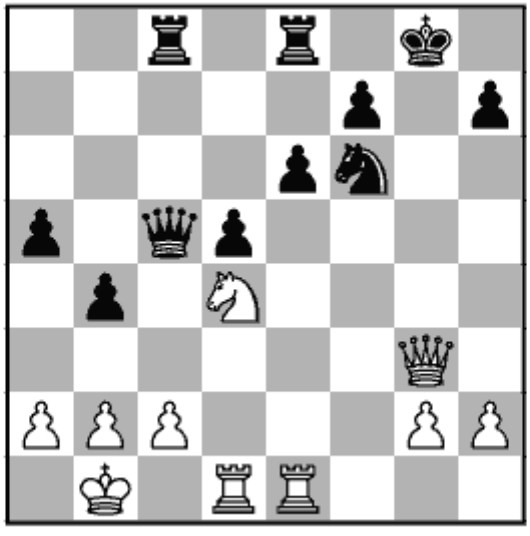
Solution 115: White to play

Kravtsiv – Lalić

Pardubice rapid 2012

White needs to spot that his second rank is vulnerable, and act accordingly. 45 Re1? loses to 45…Rexd5! and then 46 Re7 (as played in the game) 46…Qxa5 –+ or 46 cxd5 Rc2 –+. The correct **45 Rxe5 Qxe5 46 Qxe5** leaves White much better.

back



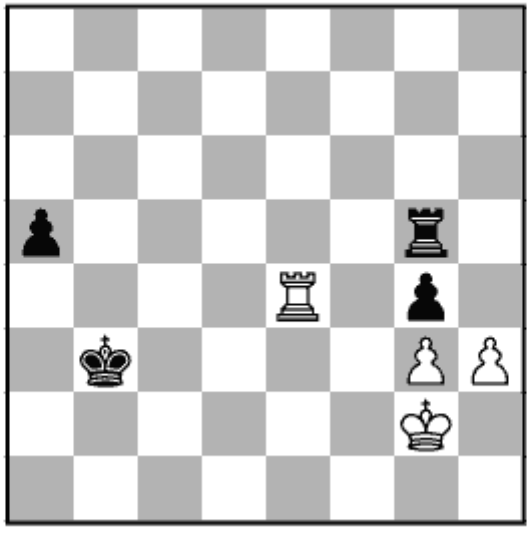
Solution 116: Black to play

Kravtsiv – Sharma (variation)

Livigno 2012

The main thing is to avoid the pin: **24…Kf8** (not 24…Kh8? 25 Qe5 Qe7 26 Rf1 Kg7 27 Rd3 +–) **25 Qh4 Ne4!** with an unclear position.

back



Solution 117: White to play

Stella – Kravtsiv

Livigno 2012

A little calculation shows that White must avoid the pawn ending, so the answer would be clear even if the rook ending were less clearly tenable.

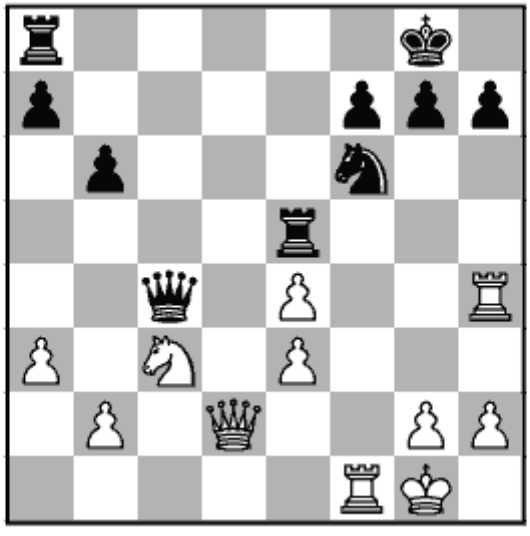
59 Re3+

After 59 Rxg4? Rxg4 60 hxg4 Kc4! White cannot promote his g-pawn, so he loses: 61 Kf3 a4 –+.

59…Kb2 60 Re2+ Kb3 61 Re3+ ½-½

The position is drawn.

back



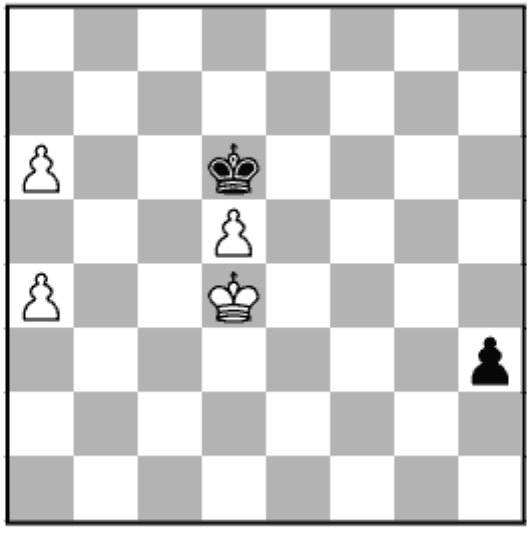
Solution 118: Black to play

Moreno Ruiz – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

If Black takes right away on e4, he loses since 22…Nxe4? 23 Qd4! costs Black the knight or the exchange: 23…Qxd4 24 exd4 Nxc3 25 dxe5 +–. Instead **22…Rae8 23 Qd4 Qe6** leads to a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 119: Black to play

T.Brown – G.Moore

Hastings 2018/19

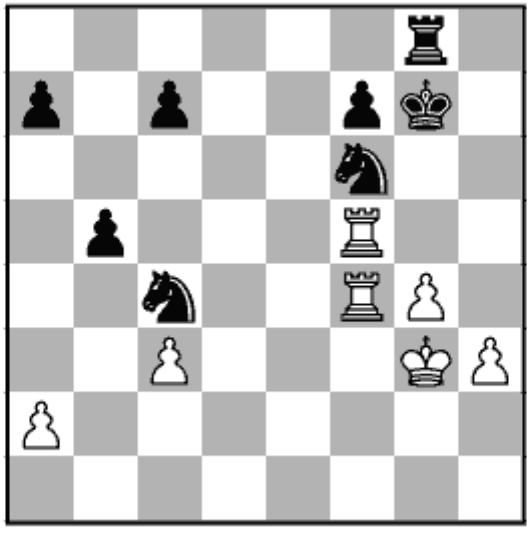
48…h2!

After 48…Kc7? 49 d6+! (not 49 a7? Kb7 =, which occurred in the game) Black lacks the time to promote his own pawn, as White is operating with checks: 49…Kxd6 (49…Kb6 50 d7 +–) 50 a7 +–.

49 a7 h1Q 50 a8Q Qd1+ =

with perpetual check.

back



Solution 120: Black to play

Training position

1…Nd6!

After 1…Nd2? White is not obliged to walk into a fork by taking the knight on f6 right away. 2 Kg2! Nde4 3 g5 Kh7 4 h4 +–.

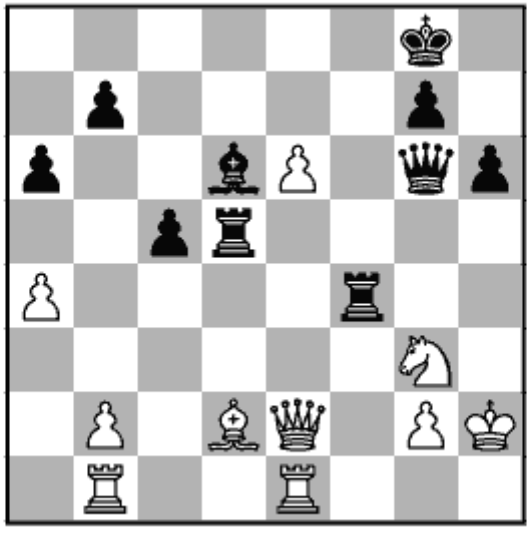
2 Rxf6

2 Rg5+? Kf8 –+.

2…Ne4+ 3 Rxe4 Kxf6

White is a little better, but the position is drawish.

back



Solution 121: White to play

Buchenau – Ramondino

Stockholm 2018/19

27 e7!

After 27 Bxf4? Bxf4 28 Qf3 Bxg3+ 29 Qxg3 (29 Kg1 Re5!? and the e-pawn will fall) 29…Rh5+ 30 Qh3 Rxh3+ = White will have no chance to advance his e-pawn because of his exposed king.

27…Rh4+ 28 Kg1 Bxe7

The game featured 28…Re5 29 Qf3 +– (the simplest, although 29 Qxe5 would also have won).

29 Qxe7

Black has no chance of salvation. For example, **29…Qxg3 30 Qe6+ Kh7 31 Qxd5** +–.

back

Solution 122: White to play

Grochal – Kravtsiv

Roosendaal 2012

White must keep control of d3.

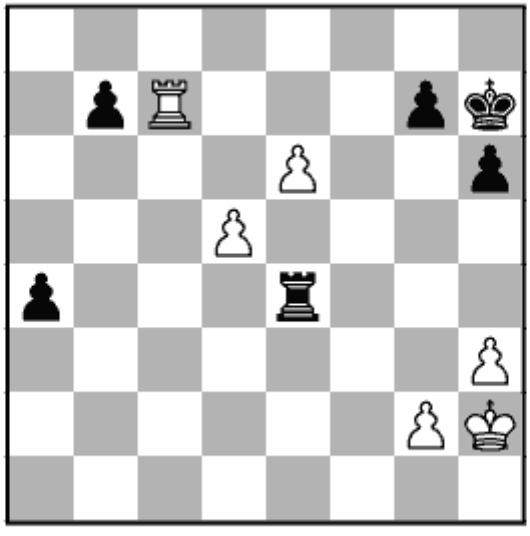
17 Qc2

In the game 17 Qb3? f4! 18 Bd4 (18 Bxf4 Nd3+ –+; 18 Bd2 f3 –+) 18…Nd3+?! (18…f3! 19 Bxe5 fxg2 –+ wins cleanly) 19 Kf1?! (19 Kd2! keeps the best practical survival chances) 19… Bxd4 20 Bxd3 Qh4 –+ gave Black a decisive advantage because the white king was too weak.

17…Ng6 18 g3

with a playable position.

back



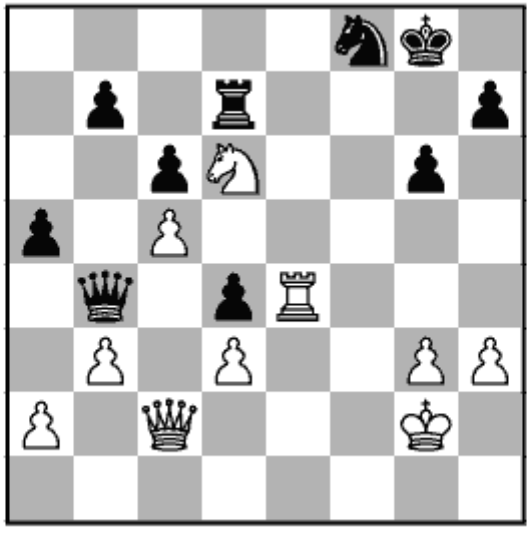
Solution 123: Black to play

Akshayraj – Kravtsiv

Chennai 2012

There is no time to lose, as White's pawns are about to queen: **40…a3!** (40…b5? 41 e7 a3 42 d6 a2 43 Rc1 +– and White promotes first) **41 Rxb7 Re5 42 e7 a2 43 Ra7 Rxe7** with an easy draw. For example, **44 Rxa2 Rd7 45 Rd2 Kg6 46 Kg3 Kf5 =**.

back



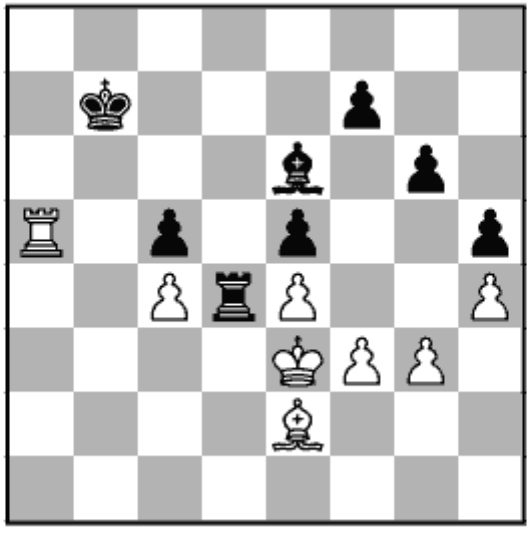
Solution 124: Black to play

S.Wagner – Ganaus

Stockholm 2018/19

The attempt to undermine the d6-knight by attacking the c5-pawn is unsuccessful: 35…b6? 36 Ne8 (36 Qc4+!? Qxc4 37 Nxc4 is also good) 36…Rf7 37 cxb6 with a decisive advantage for White. 37…Qxb6 is well met by 38 Nd6 +–, as played in the game. Therefore Black should choose **35…Qc3! 36 Qxc3 dxc3 37 Rc4 Ne6 38 Rxc3 Nxc5 =** with an equal position.

back



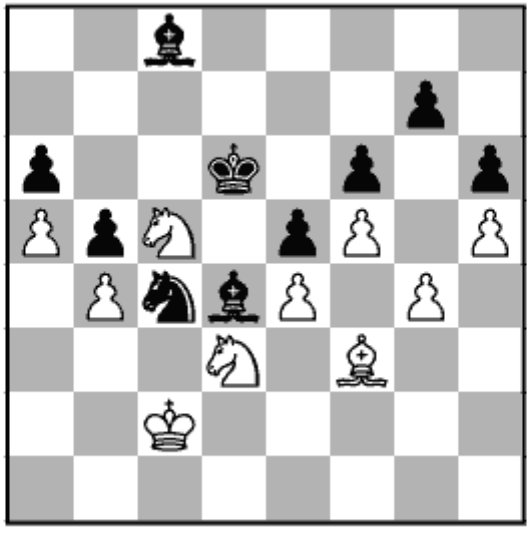
Solution 125: Black to play

Yan Tianqi – Chen Fan

Tianjin 2018/19

The problem with 58…Bxc4? is that after 59 Rxc5 Bxe2 White doesn't immediately take the bishop on e2, but secures a won endgame by 60 Rxe5! Rd7 61 Kxe2 +– (since the black king is cut off from the kingside). The game featured the correct **58…Kb6**, when **59 Rb5+ Kc6 =** leads to an equal position.

back



Solution 126: White to play

Yu Zhuoming – Wang Zideng

Tianjin 2018/19

White should retreat his knight from c5, as Black is threatening to remove its defender by taking the a5-pawn.

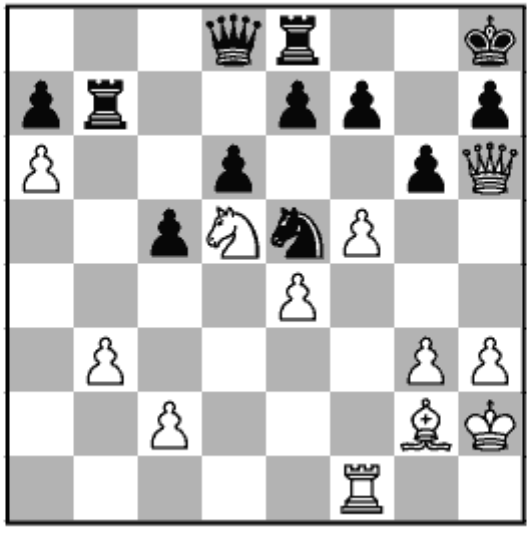
40 Nb3

Not 40 Be2? Nxa5! 41 Nxa6 (41 bxa5 Bxc5 –+) 41…Nc6 (as played in the game) 42 Nac5 Nxb4+ 43 Nxb4 Bxc5 with an extra pawn and a decisive advantage for Black.

40…Ne3+ 41 Kd2 Nc4+

with an equal position.

back



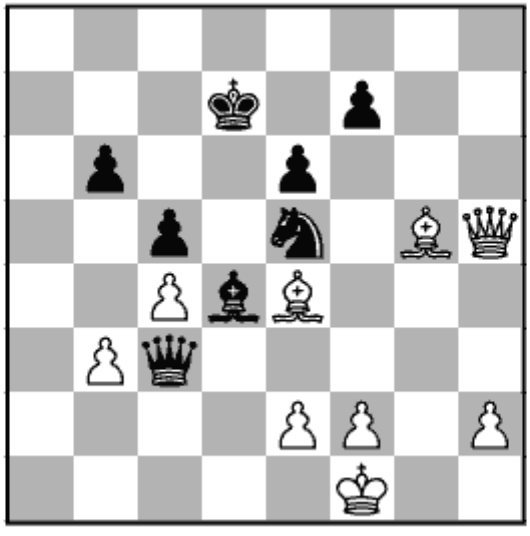
Solution 127: Black to play

Bates – Cherniaev

Hastings 2018/19

The rook needs to maintain its defence of the e7-pawn: **32… Rd7** (32…Rb8? 33 f6 +– is an easy win for White after 33… exf6 34 Nxf6 +– or 33…Rg8 34 fxe7 +–) **33 f6 Rg8 34 Rf4** (the game featured 34 fxe7 Rxe7 =+) **34…exf6 35 Nxf6 Rg7 36 Nxd7 Nxd7** with an unclear position.

back



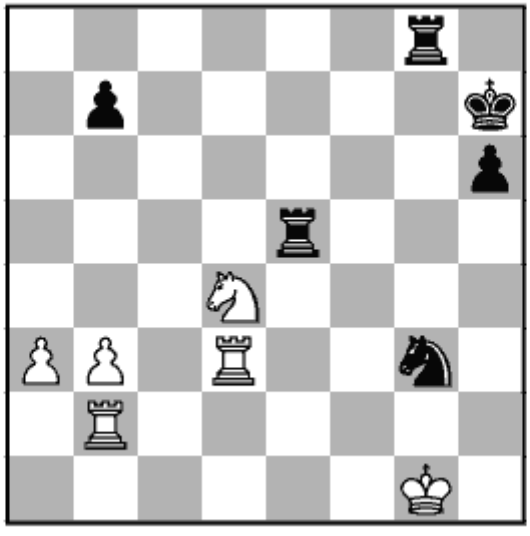
Solution 128: Black to play

Gukesh – Senthil

Mumbai 2018/19

Black needs to attack, as otherwise White's own mating threats will quickly decide the game: **34…Qa1+** (the game featured 34…Qxb3? 35 Qh8 Nc6 36 Qa8 +– with a mating attack) **35 Kg2 Bxf2! 36 Kxf2 Qd4+** with a roughly equal position.

back



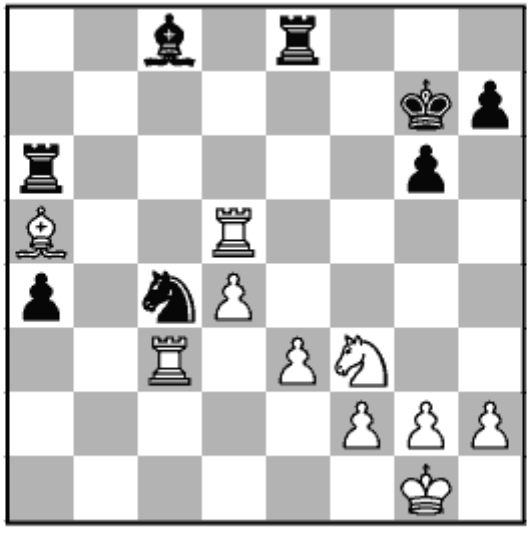
Solution 129: Black to play

Anuj – Rakshitta (based on)

Mumbai 2018/19

Black can win by exploiting the pin on the d-file: **40…Nf5+** (the double check 40…Ne2++? is tempting but wrong because after 41 Kf2 the attack on the knight denies Black time to win material and after 41…Nf4 42 Rg3 = White is OK) **41 Rg2** (41 Kf1 Rd5 42 Rbd2 Rgd8 –+) **41…Rxg2+ 42 Kxg2 Rd5 –+** with an easy win.

back



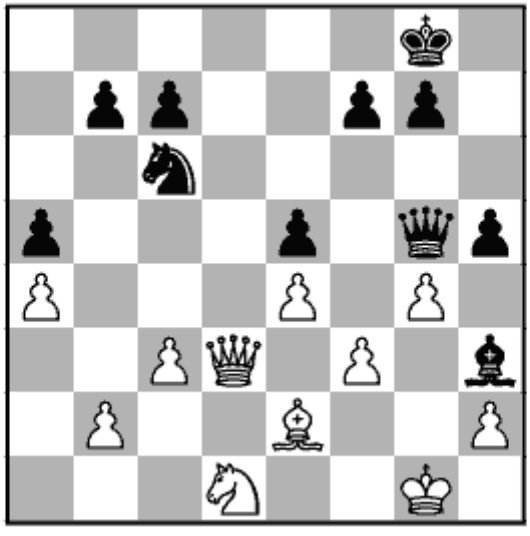
Solution 130: Black to play

Commercon – Kravtsiv (based on)

Altenkirchen 2012

Taking with the rook is wrong because then Black can't support the a4-pawn. **34…Nxa5** (after 34…Rxa5? 35 Rxa5 Nxa5 36 Rc7+ Kf6 37 Ra7! the pawn falls, with a roughly equal position) **35 Rc7+** (35 Ng5 Ra7 –+) **35…Kg8 –+** with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 131: Black to play

Movsziszian – Praveen Kumar

Mumbai 2018/19

28…Qc1!

Not 28…hxg4? 29 fxg4 Bxg4 (29…Qh6 30 Nf2 +–) 30 Qg3 +–, when Black loses his bishop due to the pin.

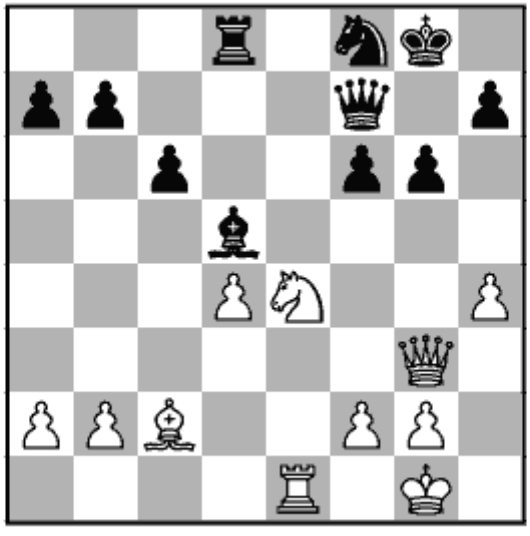
29 Qe3

After 29 Qd7 (as played in the game), 29…g6 is unclear.

29…Qc2

Black is fine. He need not fear **30 Nf2 Qb1+ 31 Bd1 hxg4**.

back



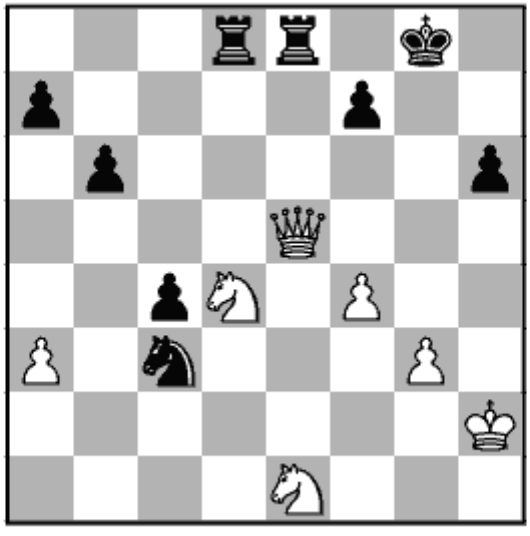
Solution 132: Black to play

Sundararajan – Praveen Kumar

Mumbai 2018/19

The king move loses quickly: **24…Kg7?** (24…Ne6 gives Black a playable position) **25 Nd6 Qd7 26 Re7+** (or 26 Nf5+, winning after 26…Kh8 27 Re7 +– or 26…Kf7 27 Re7+ +–, as in the game) **26…Qxe7 27 Nf5+ +–**.

back



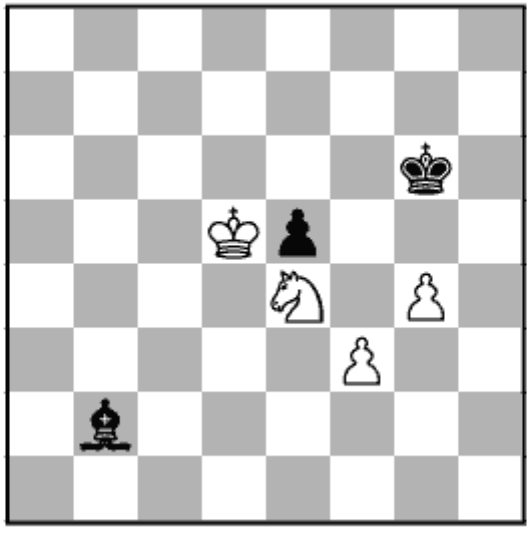
Solution 133: White to play

Kravtsiv – C.Toth

Chennai 2012

31 Qf6! (the attack on the d8-rook keeps White's knights safe; after 31 Ne6? Rxe6 32 Qxc3 Rd1 33 Ng2 Re2 = the pin costs White his knight on g2) **31…Ne4 32 Qc6! c3 33 Nec2** with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 134: Black to play

Calzetta Ruiz – Crevatin

Stockholm 2018/19

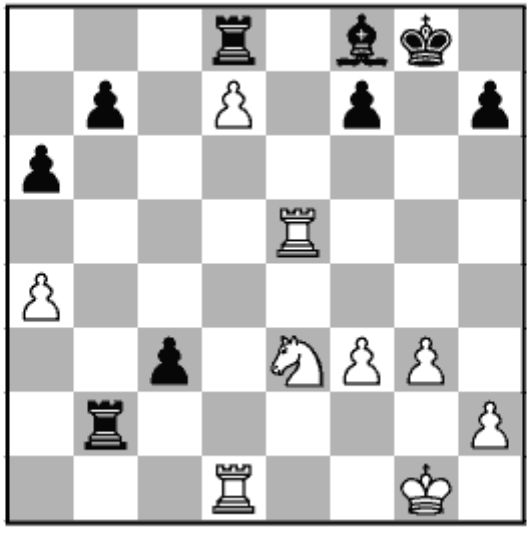
48…Ba1

After 48…Kf7? 49 Nc5! Black loses his e5-pawn: 49…Kf6 (49…Ke7 50 Nd3 +–) 50 Nd7+ Kg5 51 Ke4 +– (as played in the game).

49 Ke6 Bb2

With the king on e6, White can't win. For example: **50 Nc5 Kg5 51 Nd3 Ba1** (51…e4!? 52 fxe4 Bc3 =) **52 Nxe5 Kf4 =**.

back



Solution 135: Black to play

Deshpande – Elgabry

Mumbai 2018/19

First of all, Black must deal with the threat of 31 Re8.

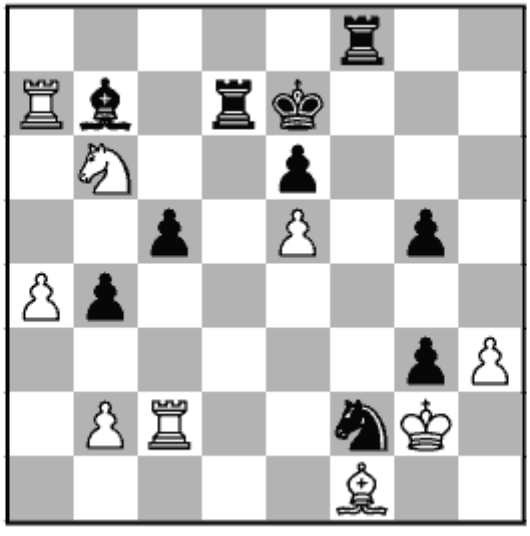
30…Re2

After 30…c2? 31 Nxc2 Rxc2 32 Re8 +– Black will be the exchange down. In the game Black chose 30…Rd2?!, which should hold, but with substantially more difficulty than the text-move.

31 Re8 c2 32 Nxc2 Rdxe8 33 dxe8Q Rxe8

with an equal position.

back



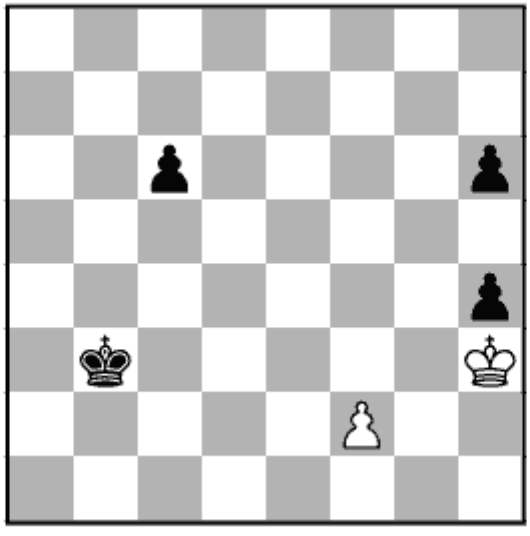
Solution 136: White to play

A.Abdullayev – Mammadova

Manisa 2019

38 Kxg3! (the game ended 38 Kg1?? Nxh3+! 39 Bxh3 Rd1+ 0-1, as White is mated) **38…Ne4+ 39 Kh2 +–** with a decisive advantage.

back



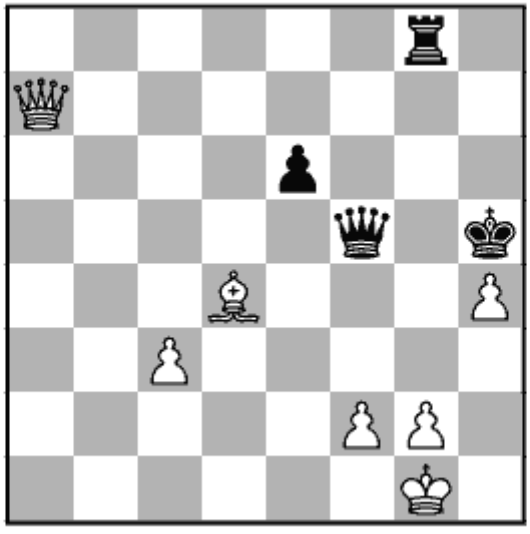
Solution 137: White to play

Moreno Tejera – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

At the board it is tempting to push passed pawns as quickly as possible. But here the king must lead: **53 Kxh4!** (the game featured 53 f4? Kc4! 54 Kxh4 Kd5 55 Kh5 Ke4 –+ with an easy win for Black) **53…Kc4** (53…c5 54 f4 c4 55 f5 =) **54 Kh5 Kd4 55 Kxh6 c5** (55…Ke4 56 Kg5 Kf3 57 Kf5 =) **56 f4 Ke4** (Black brings his king closer and will queen with check, but it is still not enough to win against the f-pawn) **57 Kg5 c4 58 f5 c3 59 f6 c2 60 f7 c1Q+ 61 Kg6 =** and White is holding on.

back



Solution 138: White to play

An.Larsen – O.Willson

Hastings 2018/19

White has a winning position, but he needs to be alert.

37 Qc7!

Not 37 Qe7? (as played in the game) 37…Rxg2+! 38 Kxg2 Qg4+ with perpetual check: 39 Kh2 Qf4+ 40 Kg1 Qg4+ 41 Kf1 Qd1+ =.

37…Kxh4

37…Qg6 38 g3 +–.

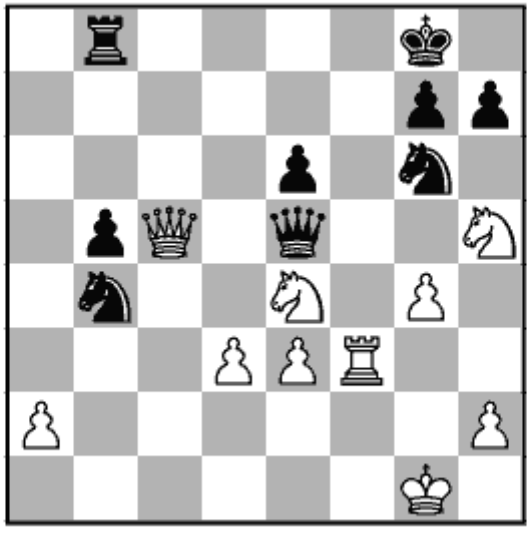
38 f3 Qb1+

Or: 38…Kh5 39 g4+ +–; 38…Ra8 39 Qg7 with mate in a few moves.

39 Kh2

with irresistible threats. For example, **39…Qg6 40 Qf4+ Kh5 41 g4+ +–**.

back



Solution 139: Black to play

Arutinian – Kravtsiv

Pardubice rapid 2012

Black's king is in danger, so he needs to exchange queens.

31…Qxc5

31…Nxd3? fails because 32 Qa7! threatens a deadly check on f6:

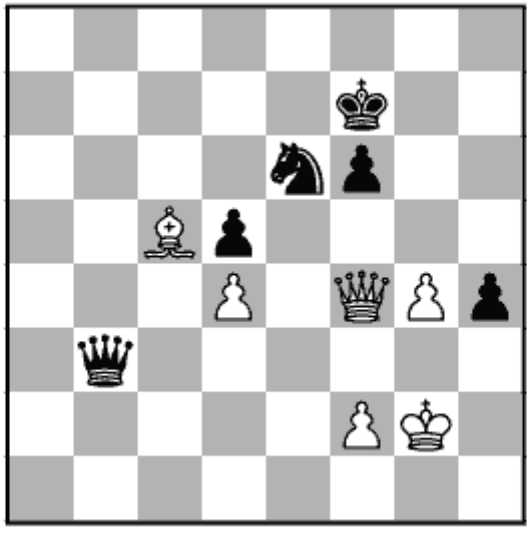
a) The game ended 32…Kh8 33 Nef6 1-0 (even better is 33 Nd6 +–).

b) 32…Rf8 33 Nef6+ gxf6 34 Qg7#.

32 Nxc5 Nxa2

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 140: White to play

F.Rayner – G.Moore

Hastings 2018/19

When attacking, you should not forget about your own king.

56 Qf5!

Not 56 Qd6? h3+ 57 Kh2 Qf3 –+. The problem for White is that after the exchange of queens, Black will have a passed d-pawn: 58 Qg3 (the game featured 58 Qe7+ Kg6 59 Qe8+ Kg7 60 Qe7+ Kh6 –+) 58…Qxg3+ 59 Kxg3 Nxc5 60 dxc5 d4 –+.

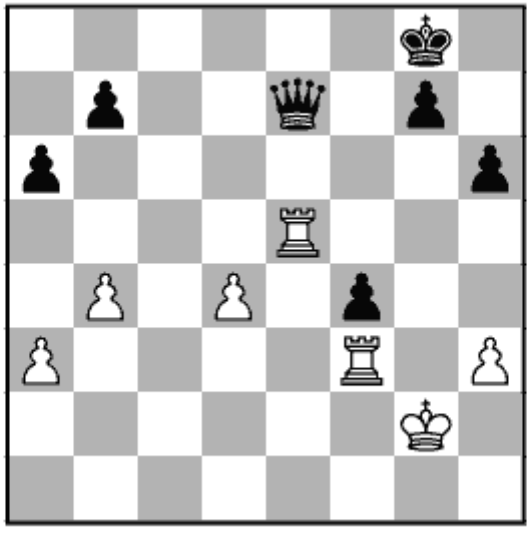
56…Ng5

56…Qd3 57 Qxd5 =.

57 Qd7+ Kg6

with an equal position.

back



Solution 141: Black to play

B.Stoyanov – Kearsley

Hastings 2018/19

It is vital that Black supports his f4-pawn by playing …g5, and only one of the queen moves makes sure of this.

43…Qf6!

43…Qf7? lets White play 44 h4!, when …g5 is no longer possible. Then 44…Qg6+ (44…Qf6 45 h5 =) 45 Kh3 = was played in the game.

44 Kf2 g5 –+

Black's powerful pawn-phalanx gives him a decisive advantage.

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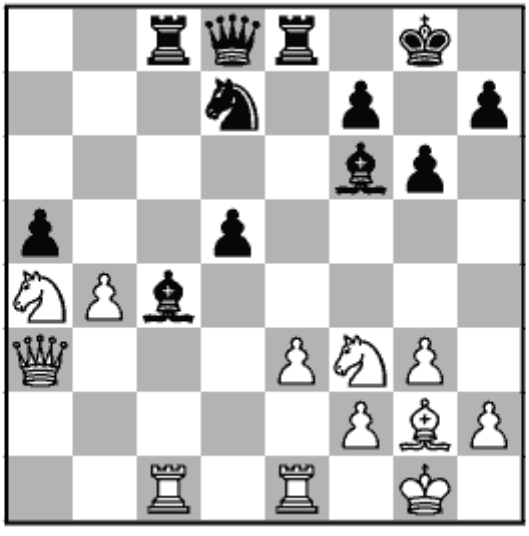

Solution 142: White to play

Swapnil – Kravtsiv

New Delhi 2012

White's reluctance to give away his b-pawn is understandable, but this was his best option.

23 b5!

After 23 bxa5? Qxa5 –+ White is caught in a deadly pin. The game then continued 24 Bh3 Nc5 25 Bxc8 Rxc8 26 Ra1 Bxa1 27 Rxa1 Ra8 –+.

23…Bxb5 24 Nc3 =+

with good chances to resist.

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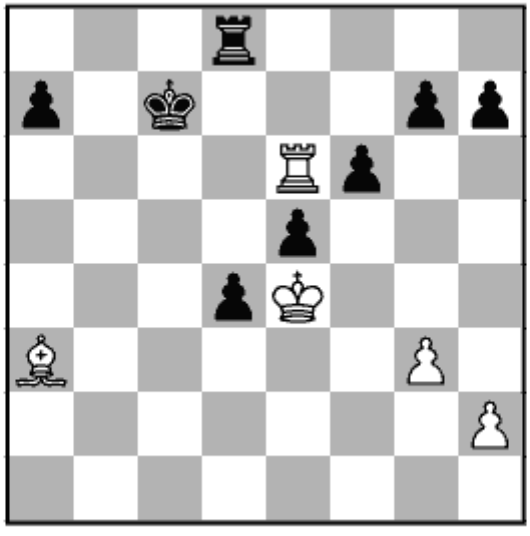


Solution 143: White to play

Sundin – Sari

Stockholm 2018/19

36 Bb4!

After 36 Re7+? Rd7! White is forced to exchange rooks, when he will not be able to hold back the swathe of black pawns. 37 Rxd7+ (37 Re8 d3 –+) 37…Kxd7 and then:

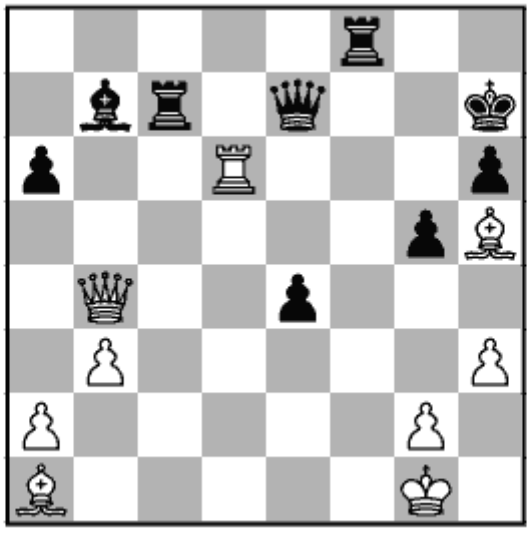
a) 38 Kd5 a5 39 Bb2 a4 40 Kc4 (40 Bc1 h5 –+) 40…Ke6 –+.

b) The game proceeded 38 Bb4 Ke6 39 g4 g6 –+ with an easy win.

36…Rb8 37 Bc5

with an unclear position.

back



Solution 144: White to play

Koykka – Schekachikhin

Stockholm 2018/19

Even in a completely won position, one mistake can ruin everything.

35 Qd4!

After 35 Qb6? Rc1+ 36 Kh2 Qc7! White must exchange queens, when he has nothing. It doesn't help to play 37 Be5 Qxb6 38 Rd7+ due to 38…Rf7!? (38…Kg8 =) 39 Rxf7+ Kg8 40 Rg7+ Kf8 41 Rf7+ with perpetual check (this was played in the game).

The text-move gives White irresistible threats. For example: **35…Rc1+** (35…e3 36 Bg6+ Kg8 37 Qh8#; 35…Qg7 36 Qxg7+ Rxg7 37 Bxg7 Kxg7 38 Rd7+ +–) **36 Kh2 Rxa1 37 Rd7** +–.

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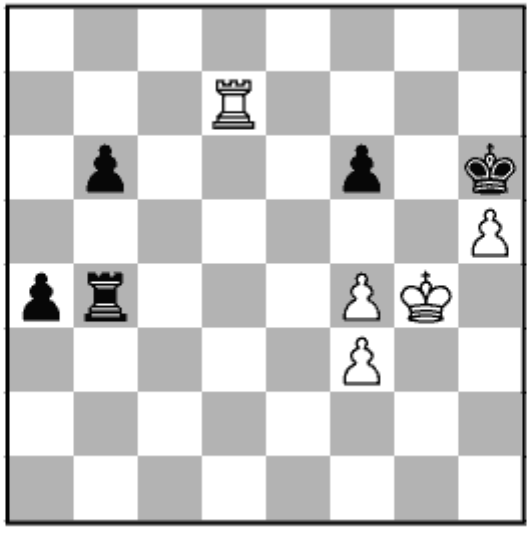


Solution 145: White to play

Sagar – Kravtsiv (variation)

Chennai 2012

The obvious move, putting the rook behind the a-pawn, is correct. The more ambitious move to f7 allows Black to win with a beautiful endgame tactic.

49 Ra7

49 Rf7? and then:

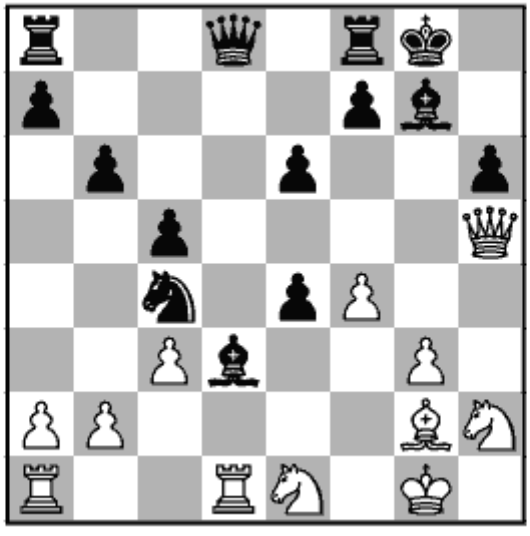
a) 49…a3? gives Black nothing: 50 Ra7! Rb3 and now 51 Ra6 = or 51 Ra8 =.

b) 49…f5+! and whichever way White takes on f5, his rook will prove unable to halt the a-pawn: 50 Kg3 Rb5 –+, 50 Rxf5 a3 51 Rf8 Ra4 –+ or 50 Kxf5 a3 51 Ra7 Rb5+ 52 Kg4 Ra5 –+.

49…b5 50 Ra6 Kg7 51 Ra7+

with an equal position.

back



Solution 146: White to play

Kravtsiv – C.Toth

Chennai 2012

The wrong move leads to defeat here: **20 Nxd3** (20 Bxe4? was played in the game, but it loses to 20…Bd4+! 21 cxd4 Qxd4+ –+) **20…exd3 21 Bxa8** (21 Ng4!? is also unclear) **21…Qxa8 22 Rxd3 Nxb2** with an unclear position.

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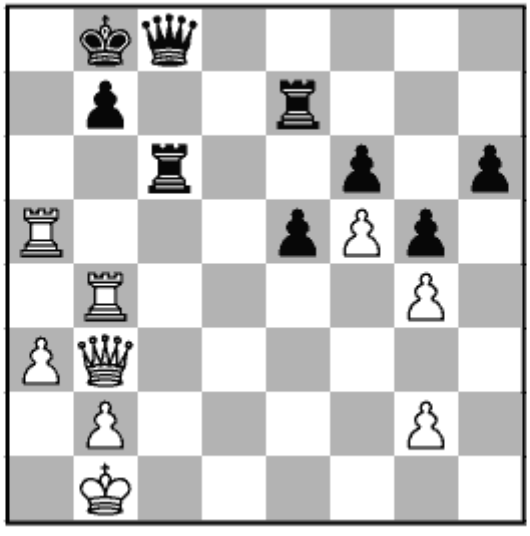

Solution 147: White to play

Åkesson – A.Dimitrova

Stockholm 2018/19

35 Qa4! (not 35 Rba4? Rc1+ 36 Ka2 Qc2! =, when suddenly Black is no worse; this occurred in the game) **35…Rc1+ 36 Ka2 Qc6** (36…Qc2 37 Ra8+ Kc7 38 Qa5+ +– with mate in a few moves) **37 Ra8+ Kc7 38 Qa5+** (38 Qa7!? Qd5+ 39 Rb3 +–) **38…b6 39 Rxb6!?** (also good is 39 Qa6 Qd5+ 40 Rb3 +–) **39…Qxb6 40 Rc8+ Kxc8 41 Qxb6** and Black has no chance of surviving.

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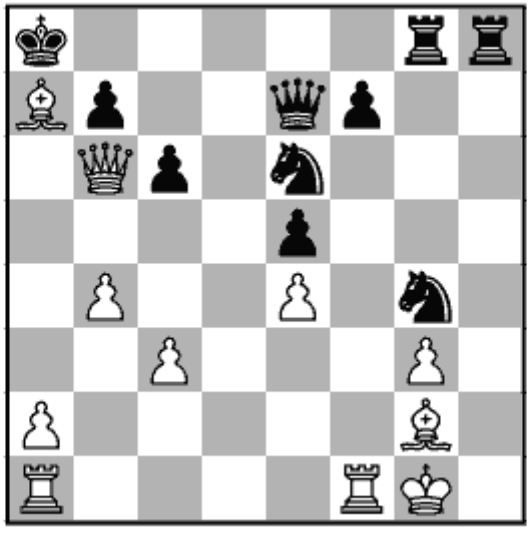

Solution 148: Black to play

Padmini – Nie Xinyang

Tianjin 2018/19

Black needs to take care of his king. Once he has done so, it is White who must be careful.

24…Nc7!

Black played 24…Nf4? but after 25 Rxf4! exf4 26 Qa5 +/– he had a difficult position.

25 Qa5

Also after 25 a4 Nh2! 26 Qa5 Na6 White can stay afloat with precise play: 27 Bf2! (27 b5? Rxg3 –+) 27…Nxf1 28 Rxf1 (not 28 Bxf1? Qh4 –+) with compensation.

25…Na6 26 Bc5 Qg5

with an unclear position, where White should be able to defend.

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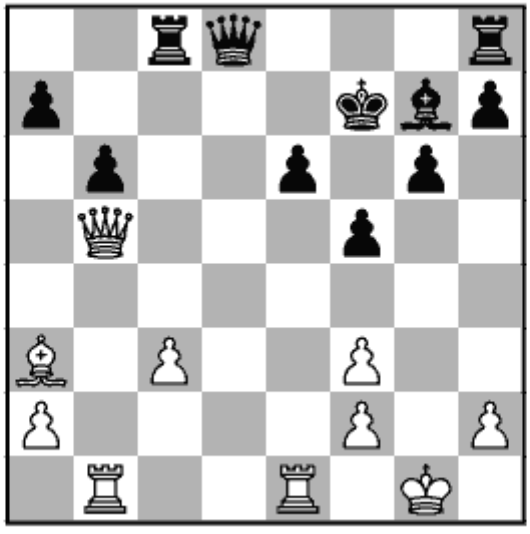


Solution 149: White to play

Babikov – Gueci

Stockholm 2018/19

Sometimes a careful strengthening of the position is better than a hasty strike.

26 Rbd1!

The game continued 26 Rxe6? but instead of taking the rook (26…Kxe6? 27 Re1+ Kf7 28 Qb3+ Kf6 29 Re6+ Kg5 30 Be7+ +–), Black replied 26…Re8!, securing her king: 27 Rd6 (27 Rxe8 Qxe8 28 Qd5+ Qe6 is unclear) 27…Qg5+ 28 Kh1, and now 28…Kg8 would have given a roughly equal position.

26…Qg5+ 27 Kf1

Also possible is 27 Kh1 +–.

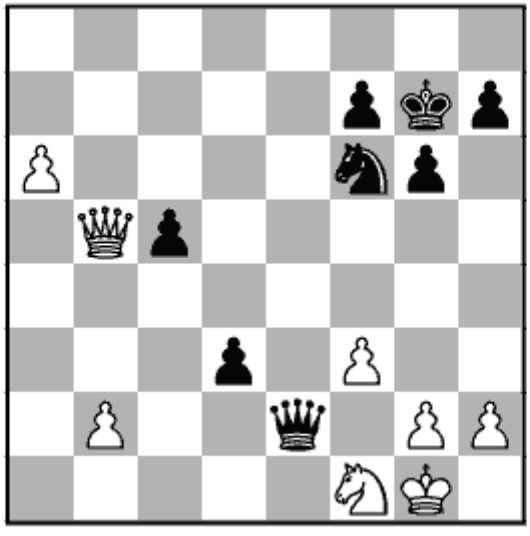
27…Rhe8

Or 27…Rhd8 28 Rd7+ Kg8 29 Be7 +–.

28 Rxe6!

With the loose rook on e8, Black's king can't be evacuated, so White has a decisive attack: **28…Rxe6** (28…Rcd8 29 Rd7+ +–) **29 Qd7+ Re7 30 Bxe7 +–** and Black can resign.

back



Solution 150: Black to play

Zhao Jun – Fier

Tianjin 2018/19

It is very important to be able to drive the white king into the corner, and for that purpose a check on d4 is ideal.

29…Qe5!

After 29…Qc2? 30 a7 d2 31 Nxd2 Qxd2 32 a8Q, as played in the game, the checks will soon be over: 32…Qd4+ 33 Kf1 Qd1+ 34 Kf2 Qd4+ 35 Ke2 +–.

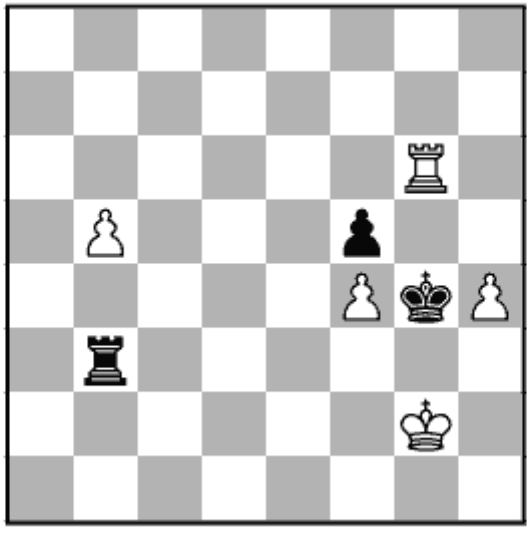
30 a7

White can preserve some hopes of victory with 30 Qxd3!, but after 30…Qxb2 31 Ne3 (31 g4 Qa1 is unclear) 31…Qa1+ 32 Kf2 h5 += his advantage is small.

30…Qd4+! 31 Kh1 d2 32 Nxd2 Qxd2

Now Black is completely fine, thanks to the mate threat: **33 Qxc5** (33 h3 Qd1+ 34 Kh2 Qd6+ =) **33…Nd7** (33…Qd8!?) **34 Qg1 Qd5** with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 151: Black to play

Yan Tianqi – Huang Renjie

Tianjin 2018/19

Usually it makes sense to keep the king closer to the centre, and avoid getting it trapped on the edge of the board in particular. However, that is not the case here.

47…Kxh4!

Not 47…Kxf4? 48 b6 Rb2+, when White must avoid 49 Kg1? (the game was agreed drawn here) 49…Kf3 50 h5 Rb1+ 51 Kh2 Rb2+ 52 Kh3 Rb1 = with a repetition of moves, and play 49 Kf1! Kf3 50 Ke1, when Black loses since he can't stop the h-pawn: 50…Ke3 51 Re6+ Kf4 52 h5 +–.

48 b6 Kh5

with an easy draw: **49 Rg5+** (49 Rf6 Kg4 =) **49…Kh6 =**.

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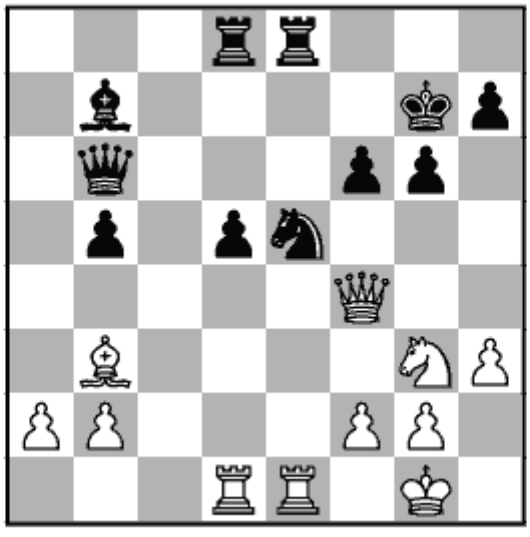


Solution 152: Black to play

Hu Yu – Gu Tianlu (based on)

Tianjin 2018/19

Black appears to have an enticing choice of knight moves, but it is vital to consider all options. My question here guided you to look at the stronger pawn advance, but at the board you would need to find it completely on your own!

30…d4!

This pawn advance brings White to the brink of defeat, as his pieces are too passive. Not:

a) 30…Nd3? is met by 31 Nf5+! Kf7 (31…gxf5? 32 Qg3+ +/–) 32 Nh6+ Kg7 33 Nf5+ = with a repetition of moves.

b) 30…Nc4? 31 Re2 Rxe2 32 Nxe2 Nxb2 33 Qd4 Qxd4 34 Rxd4 = with a roughly level endgame.

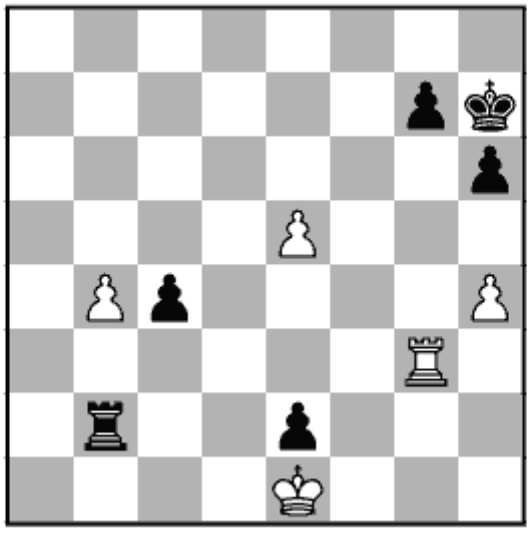
31 Qd2

31 Ne4 d3 32 Qd2 Rd4 –+ and 31 Rc1 d3 32 Qd2 (32 Nf1 h5!? 33 Nd2 Rd4 34 Qg3 h4 –+) 32…Bc6 33 Nf1 Qb7 –+ are also lost for White.

31…d3 32 Re3 Qc6 33 f3 Qc5 34 Kh1 Qd4

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 153: White to play

Narciso Dublan – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

The key point to see is that White cannot draw by directly taking the pawn on e2. In fact, both suggested moves are objectively good enough to draw with the right follow-up, but one is clearly preferable from a practical viewpoint.

56 e6!

56 Re3?! (as played in the game) 56…Kg8 and now 57 Rxe2? loses to 57…c3! –+ since after 58 Kd1 Rxb4 White will be two pawns down. Instead White can hang on with 57 e6! Kf8 58 Rxe2!, meeting 58…c3 with 59 Kd1!, though further accurate defence in a R+P vs R+2P ending will be needed.

56…Kg8

56…Rxb4 57 Re3 Rb8 and now both 58 h5!? = and 58 Kxe2 = draw.

57 e7 Kf7 58 Rxg7+ Ke8

with an equal position.

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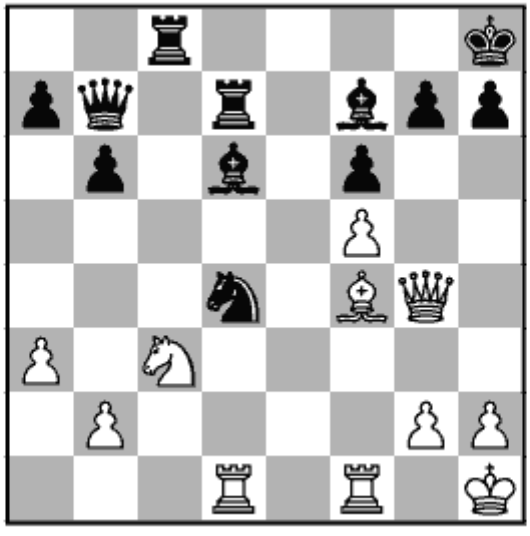


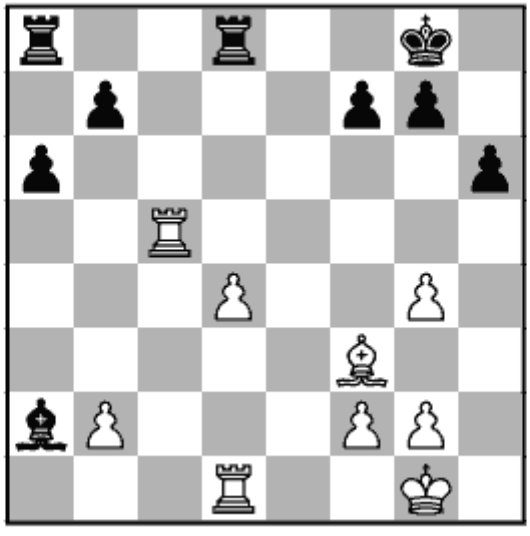
Solution 154: White to play

Mrudul – Gajek

Mumbai 2018/19

The loose knight on c3 obliges White to play very precisely: **32 Bxd6!** (not 32 Rxd4? Bxa3! 33 Rxd7 Qxd7 –+, as played in the game, when Black has an extra pawn and a decisive advantage) **32…Rxd6** (32…Nc2 33 Qf4 =+) **33 Rxd4 =+** and Black is a little better, but the worst is behind White.

back



Solution 155: Black to play

Srihari – Rakshitta

Mumbai 2018/19

27…Rab8 (27…Rd7? deprives the bishop of a vital retreat-square, and loses after 28 Ra1! Bb3 29 Ra3 Be6 30 d5 +–, as played in the game) **28 d5** (28 Ra1 Be6 =) **28…Kf8** and Black is close to equality. He need not fear **29 Ra1 b6**.

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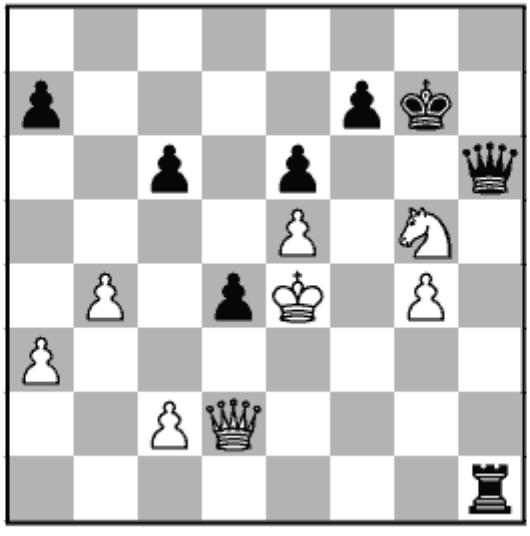


Solution 156: Black to play

Ziatdinov – Deshpande

Mumbai 2018/19

The main thing is not to miss White's potential ideas with Nxe6+.

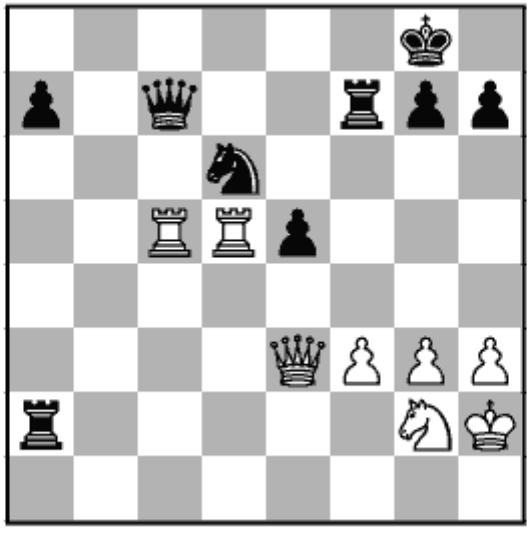
52…Qh4!

After 52…Qh2? 53 Nxe6+! a draw was agreed in the game due to 53…fxe6 (not 53…Kh7? 54 Qxh2+ Rxh2 55 Nxd4 +–) 54 Qg5+ Kh7 55 Qe7+ = with perpetual check.

53 Qf4 Qe1+! 54 Kxd4 Rf1 –+

with an easy win. **55 Nf3** is well met by **55…Qf2+**.

back



Solution 157: Black to play

Thapa – Ghelani

Mumbai 2018/19

There's an understandable reluctance to walk into a pin, but it is vital for Black to control the c8-square.

37…Qd7!

37…Qe7? fails due to 38 Rc6! (38 Qb3?!, as played in the game, is met by 38…Ra6) 38…Nf5 39 Qb3 +–, when Black has nothing better than giving up his rook on g2.

38 Qb3 Ra6 +=

While Black is a little worse, he has no major problems.

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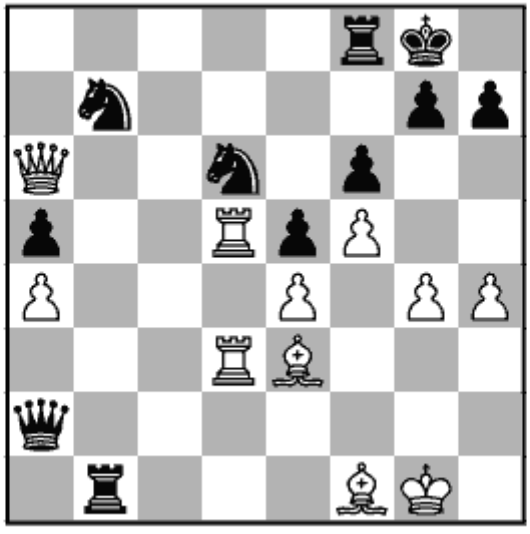

Solution 158: White to play

Šafranska – Nayem

Mumbai 2018/19

Before making any move, you need to check for any surprising and powerful replies the opponent might have.

40 Rd2

40 Rxd6? is tempting, but fails to consider the opponent's ideas. After 40…Qe2!, instead of winning, White loses: 41 Qc4+ (41 Rd1 Qxe3+ –+) 41…Kh8 42 Bc1 (played in the game) 42…Nxd6 –+.

40…Qc4 41 Qxc4 Nxc4 42 R2d3

with a roughly equal position.

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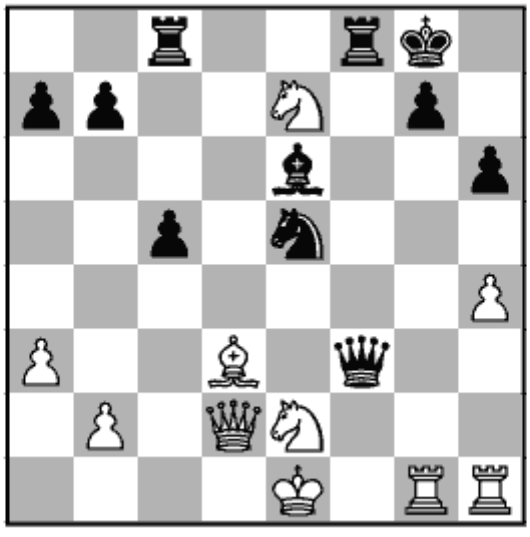

Solution 159: Black to play

Jimenez Martinez – Schmidek

Stockholm 2018/19

To find the right move here you need to think carefully how White will react.

24…Kh8!

24…Kf7? 25 Ng6! (but not 25 Rf1? Kxe7 26 Rxf3 Nxf3+ –+, as played in the game) 25…Nxd3+ 26 Qxd3 Qxd3 27 Ne5+ +/– with an extra knight.

25 Qc3

Not 25 Ng6+? Nxg6 26 Bxg6 Rcd8 –+.

25…Qxd3 26 Ng6+

26 Qxe5? Qb1+ 27 Kd2 Rcd8+ –+.

26…Qxg6 27 Rxg6 Nxg6

Black has an advantage and chances to win.

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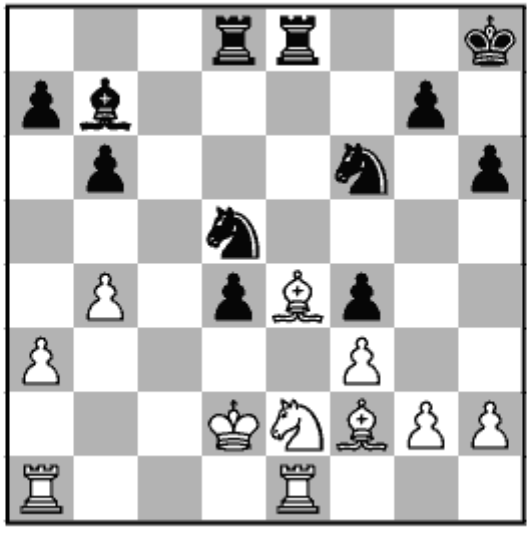

Solution 160: White to play

Narciso Dublan – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

White should preserve his light-squared bishop, which is his king's main bodyguard and can cover the important c4-square.

26 Bd3!

26 Bxd5? Nxd5 –/+ leaves White in a difficult position without this key bishop. For example: 27 Nxd4 Ne3 28 Bxe3 (28 Kc3 Rd5 –/+) 28…fxe3+ 29 Kc3 Rd7 (29…Rd5!? –/+) 30 Rad1 e2 31 Rd2 Ba6 –/+ (as played in the game) leaves White in big trouble as he can't round up the e2-pawn.

26…Nd7

White need not fear 26…Ne3 27 Nxf4 =.

27 Nxd4 Ne5

with a roughly equal position.

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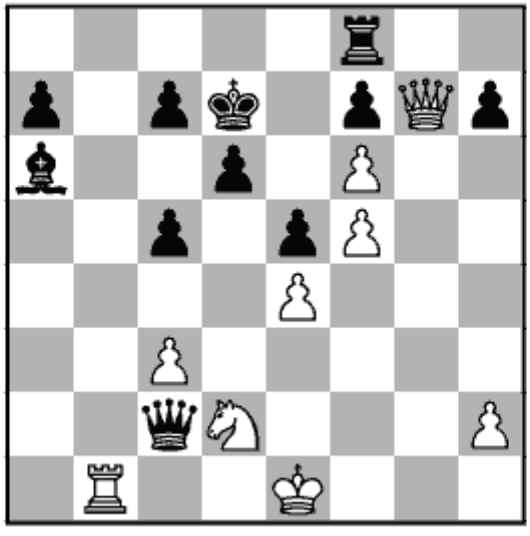

Solution 161: Black to play

M.Tan – Kravtsiv

Roosendaal 2012

Taking on c3 is wrong because it costs Black a vital tempo in a position where the initiative is far more important.

26…Qd3!

26…Qxc3? 27 Kd1! Bd3 (slightly better is 27…Qe3!? 28 Rb3 Qe2+, keeping some chances of victory) 28 Rc1 Qd4 29 Qxf8 Qg1+ 30 Nf1 is unclear since Black has plenty of checks, but no mate.

27 Kd1 Qe2+ 28 Kc1 Bd3!

Black wins easily. **29 Qxf8** is met by **29…Qe1+ 30 Kb2 Qxd2+ 31 Ka3 Qxc3+** –+ with mate in a few moves.

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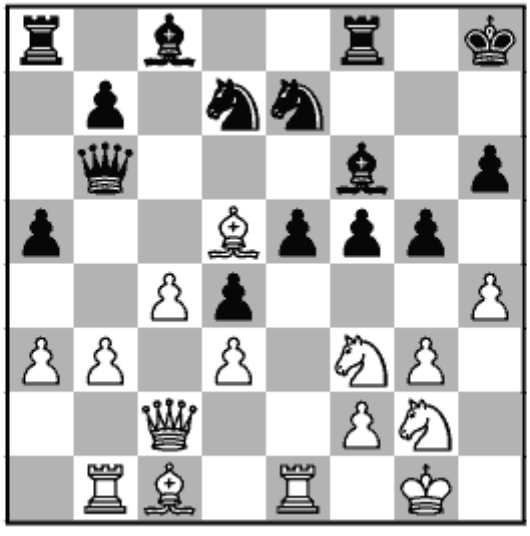

Solution 162: Black to play

Anuj – Rakshitta

Mumbai 2018/19

Black needs to spot White's counter-tactic to see that he needs to insert an exchange on d5 before playing …g4.

21…Nxd5!

The problem with 21…g4? is the reply 22 Nxd4! (22 Nh2?, as played in the game, loses to 22…Nxd5 –+) 22…Nxd5 (the key point is 22…Qxd4? 23 Be3 +–, trapping the queen; 22…exd4 23 Bxh6 gives White an attack) 23 Nxf5 with an unclear position.

22 cxd5

22 hxg5 Nc3 23 gxf6 Nxb1 24 Qxb1 Qxf6 –+.

22…g4 23 Nd2

Now 23 Nxd4 Qxd4 –+ is no problem for Black as the queen has an easy exit.

23…Qd6

Black is close to victory.

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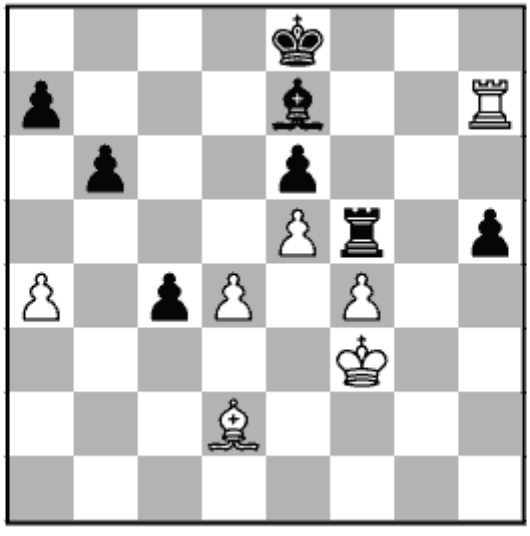

Solution 163: White to play

Shyam – Aditya

Mumbai 2018/19

49 Rh8+!

The immediate 49 Ke4? allows Black the excellent defensive resource 49…h4 50 d5 Rf7!, after which he is OK. For example: 51 Rh8+ (51 Rh5 exd5+ 52 Kxd5 c3 53 Bc1 Rg7 is unclear) 51…Rf8 (played in the game) 52 Rxf8+ Bxf8 53 dxe6 h3 54 Kf3 Bh6 =.

49…Kd7

49…Kf7 50 Rc8 +–.

50 Ke4 h4 51 d5

with a decisive advantage. Black is not saved by **51…Rf8** due to **52 dxe6+** (or 52 Rh7 +–) **52…Kxe6 53 Rh6+ Kd7 54 f5** +–.

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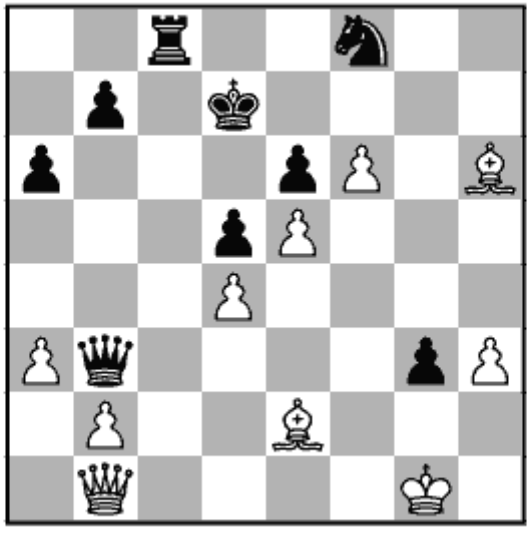

Solution 164: White to play

Kravtsiv – D.Ballesteros

Madrid 2012

As well as covering the c2-square, White needs to protect his loose queen, for reasons we shall soon see.

42 Bd3!

After 42 Bd1? (as played in the game) 42…Qb6 43 Be3 (43 Ba4+ Kd8 –+) 43…Rc3! White will lose a pawn on d4 or b2: 44 Ba4+ Kd8 45 Qe1 Qxb2 –+.

42…Rc4!

42…Qb6?! 43 Be3 +–.

43 Bxc4 dxc4 +/–

With accurate play White will have good winning chances, and in any case is certainly no longer in any danger.

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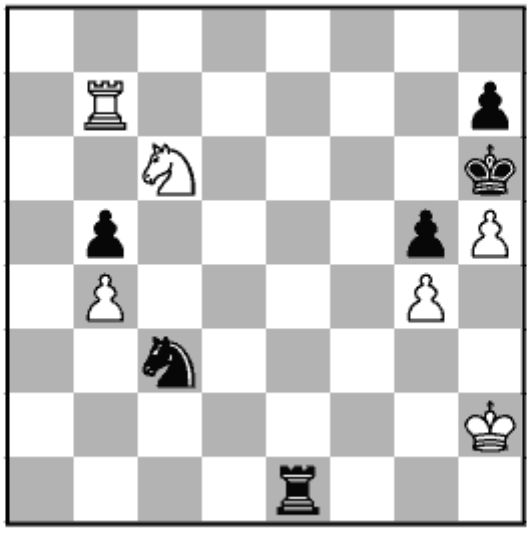

Solution 165: Black to play

Ali Marandi – Santarius

Burlingame 2019

Black needs to drive the white king to the g-file so that the g4-pawn will fall with check.

46…Re2+!

Not 46…Re4? 47 Ne7! with irresistible threats: 47…Kg7 (47…Rxg4 48 Ng8+ Kxh5 49 Nf6+ +–) 48 Nd5+ Kh6 49 Nf6 (not 49 Nxc3? Re2+ =, but 49 Rb6+ Kg7 50 Nxc3 +– is also good) 49…Re2+ 50 Kg1 Re1+ 51 Kg2 Re2+ 52 Kf1 +– (as played in the game) and it is time for Black to resign.

47 Kg3

47 Kg1? loses to 47…Re4 –+.

47…Re3+ 48 Kf2 Nd1+ 49 Kg2

After the weaker 49 Kf1?! Re4 50 Ne7 Ne3+ Black will take on g4 with check.

49…Re4 50 Kg3 Re3+ =

with a repetition of moves.

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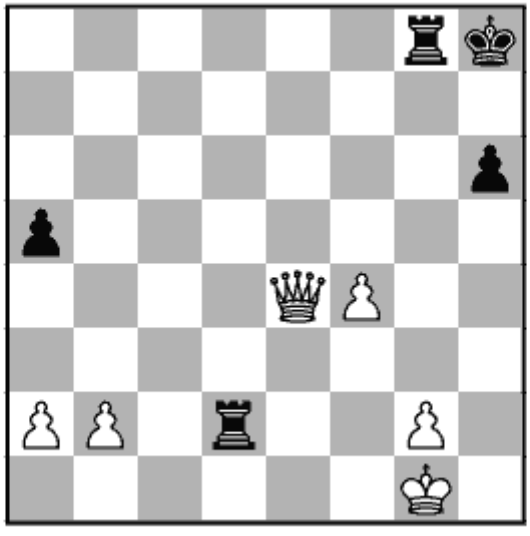

Solution 166: White to play

Banerjee – Lama

Mumbai 2018/19

With his king on h2, White would not have time to pick up the a5-pawn, so f1 is the right choice.

41 Kf1!

After 41 Kh2? Rg7! White loses one of his pawns and the position becomes a draw. For example: 42 Kh3 Rxb2 43 g4 Rxa2 (as played in the game) 44 Qe8+ Kh7 45 Qe4+ Kh8 46 f5 Rb2 =.

41…Rg7 42 Qa8+ Kh7 43 Qxa5 Rgxg2

43…Rdxg2 44 Qf5+ Kh8 45 Qe5 +–.

44 Qf5+

White will soon engineer a check on b7 that will force Black to remove his rook from g2: **44…Kg7 45 Qe5+ Kf7 46 Qc7+ Kg8 47 Qc8+ Kh7 48 Qb7+ Rg7 49 Qe4+** and White should win.

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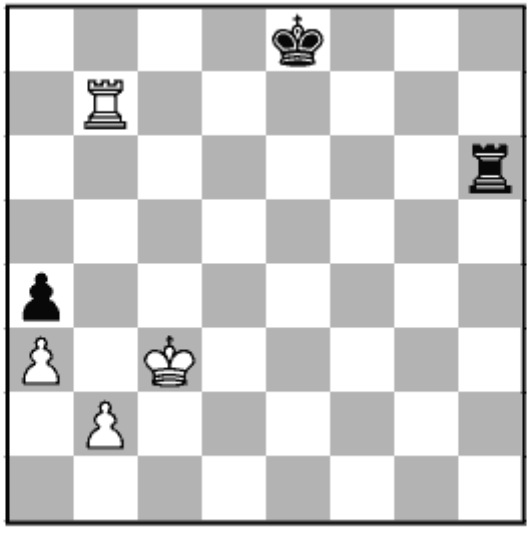

Solution 167: White to play

Anuj – Subrota

Mumbai 2018/19

75 Kb4 (75 Rb4? Ra6 {played in the game} 76 Kc4 Kd7 77 Kb5 Ra8 = is drawn because White can't pick up the a4-pawn) **75…Ra6** (75…Rh4+ 76 Ka5 Kd8 77 Rb4 +–) **76 Rb8+!** (White drives the enemy king to its second rank in order to force an exchange of rooks) **76…Kd7 77 Kb5 Ra7** (77…Rg6 78 Kxa4 +–) **78 Kb6 Rc7 79 Rb7 +–**.

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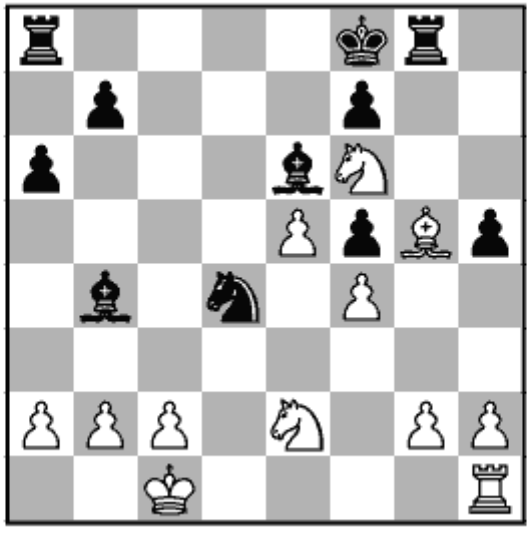

Solution 168: White to play

Spanton – L.Butt

Hastings 2018/19

Sometimes preventing the opponent from bringing pieces into play is much more important than winning an exchange.

18 Nxd4!

In the game 18 Bh6+? Ke7 19 Nxg8+ Rxg8 20 Nxd4 Rxg2 gave Black compensation for the pawn.

18…Rh8

18…Rg6? loses to 19 Nxh5 +–.

19 Rd1

Black lacks the time to complete his development and has big problems. **19…Be7** is well met by **20 Nxe6+ fxe6 21 Rd7** +/–.

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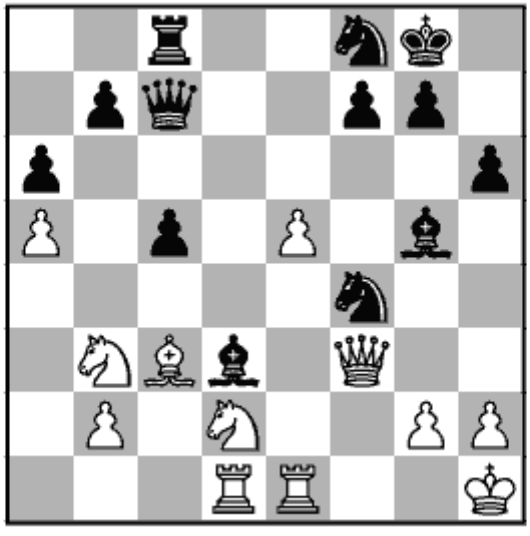


Solution 169: Black to play

Kravtsiv – K.Berg

Cappelle-la-Grande 2013

After both moves, the critical continuation you needed to look at was 27 h4.

26…N8e6

Not 26…Bc2? 27 h4! Nxg2 (27…Bxh4 28 Qxf4 Ng6 29 Qg4 +– was played in the game) 28 Qxg2 Bxh4 29 Rf1 (29 Rg1!? +/–) 29…Bxd1 30 Rxd1 +/–.

27 h4

27 g3?! Nh3 gives Black the initiative.

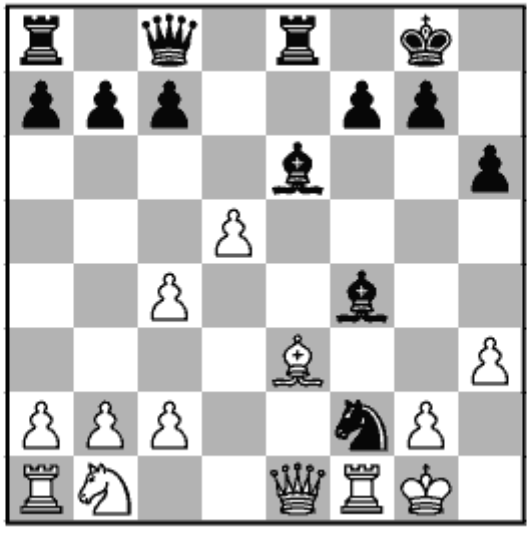
27…Bxh4!

Not 27…Be7? 28 g3 Nh3 29 Kh2 +–.

28 g3 Qe7

with complex play and chances for both sides. For example, **29 Re3 Be2 30 Rxe2 Bxg3!**.

back



Solution 170: White to play

Sarvadh – Banik

Burlingame 2019

One of these moves leads to defeat.

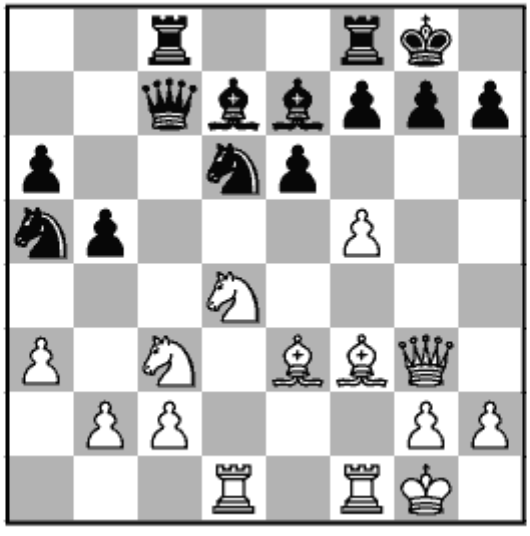
22 Qxf2!

In the game 22 Bxf4? Nxh3+! 23 gxh3 Bxh3 24 Qg3 Bxf1 25 Kxf1 Qf5 gave White a hopeless position because he couldn't finish his development. After 26 Qf2 (26 Nc3 g5 –+) 26… Qh3+ 27 Kg1 Qg4+ White soon resigned.

22…Bxe3 23 Qxe3 Bxd5 24 Qf4

with a playable and roughly equal position.

back



Solution 171: Black to play

Divya – Triton

Mumbai 2018/19

Black wants to exchange queens, but must bear in mind White's threat of Bh6.

17…Nac4!

The correct knight. 17…Ndc4? wrongly moves the knight away from d6, which leaves Black poorly placed to answer the Bh6 idea: 18 Bf4! Qa7 (18…Qd8 19 fxe6 fxe6 20 Nxe6 Qb6+ 21 Nd4 +–) 19 Bh6 Bf6 (after 19…g6, as played in the game, White can win in several ways, such as 20 b4!? +–) 20 Bxg7 Bxg7 21 f6 +–.

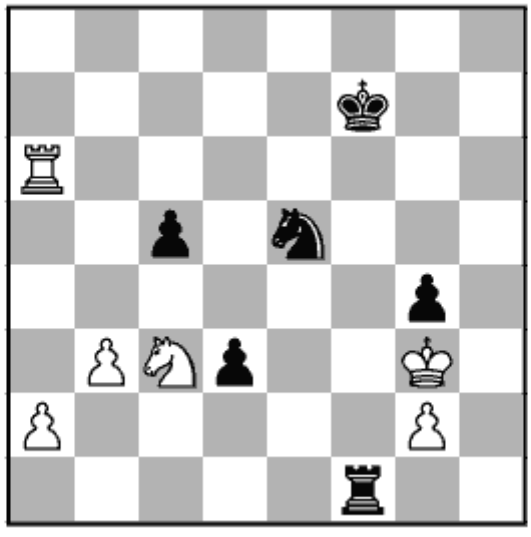
18 Bc1

18 Bh6 Bf6 19 Bxg7 Bxg7 20 f6 Ne8 =+.

18…Bf6

and Black has a pleasant game.

back



Solution 172: White to play

Mahindrakar – Srija

Mumbai 2018/19

The wrong choice here has miserable consequences for White.

49 Rd6!

Not 49 Ne4? Re1:

a) 50 Kf4 loses right away: 50…Ng6+ 51 Kf5 Ne7+ (51…Nh4+!? –+ was played in the game) 52 Kf4 Nd5+ 53 Kf5 Rxe4 54 Kxe4 d2 –+.

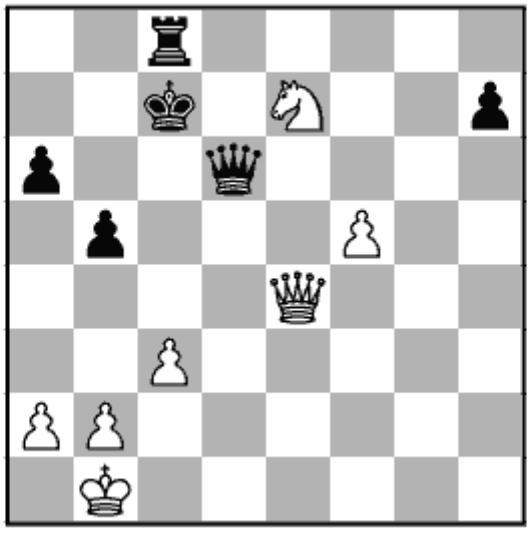
b) 50 Nc3 loses time, which is fatal here: 50…c4 51 bxc4 (51 Rd6 Rc1 –+) 51…d2 52 Rd6 Nxc4 –+.

c) 50 Nf2 Ke7!? 51 Nxd3! Nxd3 52 Kxg4 with some practical chances of surviving, but Black should probably win.

49…Ke7

Now **50 Nb5** (or 50 Rd5!?) is roughly equal. **50…Rd1** is met by **51 Kf4 d2 52 Ke3**.

back



Solution 173: White to play

A.Hong – Stukopin

Burlingame 2019

The knight needs to drop back while there is still a way to do so.

39 Nd5+

After 39 a3? Rd8! White's knight is stuck on e7, and his position is hopeless. Black then wants to exchange queens:

a) 40 f6 Qd3+ –+.

b) 40 Ka1 Rd7!? (this wins in just a few moves, though 40… Qc5 –+ is also good enough) 41 f6 Qxf6 42 Nd5+ Rxd5 43 Qxd5 Qf1+ 44 Ka2 Qc4+ –+.

c) 40 Ka2 Qc5 41 Kb1 Qc4 gives Black a decisive plus. For instance, 42 Qh1 (as played in the game; or 42 Qe5+ Kb7 –+) 42…Rd6 43 f6 Qd3+ 44 Ka2 Kd7 45 Qb7+ Ke6 –+.

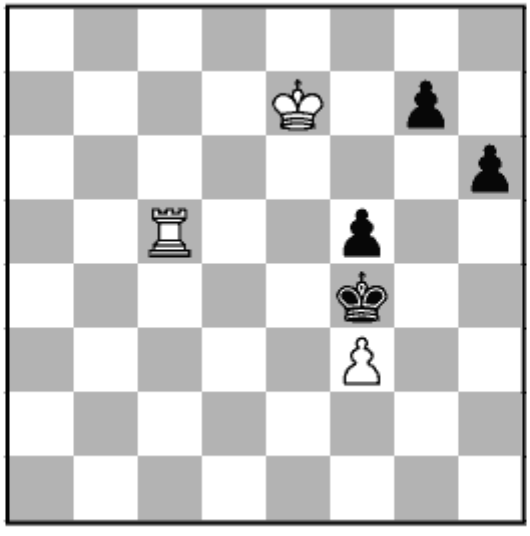
39…Kc6

39…Kd7 40 f6 is unclear too.

40 Nb4++ Kb6 41 a3

White is keeping the game unclear.

back



Solution 174: Black to play

Deviatkin – Nguyen Van Huy

Mumbai 2018/19

Black should take on f3 immediately since if the rook then takes on f5, White loses time.

74…Kxf3!

74…h5? 75 Ke6 g6 (now 75…Kxf3 can be met by 76 Kxf5! +–) 76 Kf6 Kxf3 (76…h4 77 Kxg6 Kxf3 78 Kxf5 +– was played in the game) 77 Rc4! (White stops the pawns and wins; 77 Kg5!? +– has the same idea and also works, but not 77 Kxg6? Kg4! 78 Rxf5 h4 =) 77…f4 78 Kg5 +–.

75 Ke6

75 Rxf5+ Kg4 76 Rf1 (76 Ke6 h5 is also a draw) 76…h5 77 Ke6 h4 =.

75…f4

Or 75…Kg4!? 76 Rxf5 h5 =.

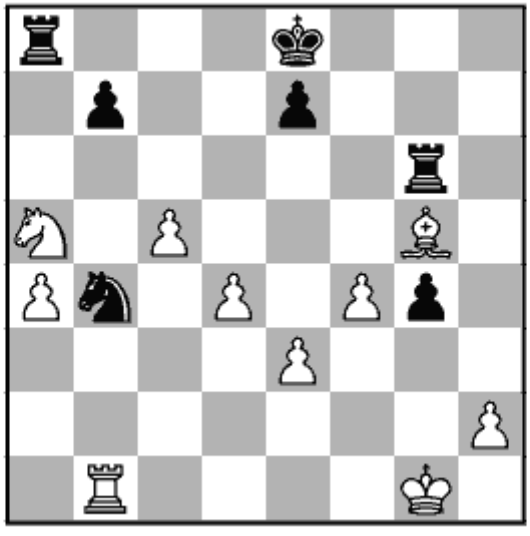
76 Kf5 g5

76…g6+!? =.

77 Rc3+ Kg2

White does not have time to pick up the h6-pawn, and the position is a draw: **78 Ke4** (78 Kg4 f3 79 Rxf3 h5+ =) **78… Kf2 79 Ra3 Kg2** =.

back



Solution 175: Black to play

Pranav – Mahindrakar

Mumbai 2018/19

If Black puts his knight on c2, it will get in the way of the black rooks' counterplay against the white king, and allow White to pick up the pawn on b7.

37…Nd5!

The game featured 37…Nc2? 38 Nc4 Rxa4 39 Ne5 Rga6 40 Rxb7 +– with a decisive advantage for White.

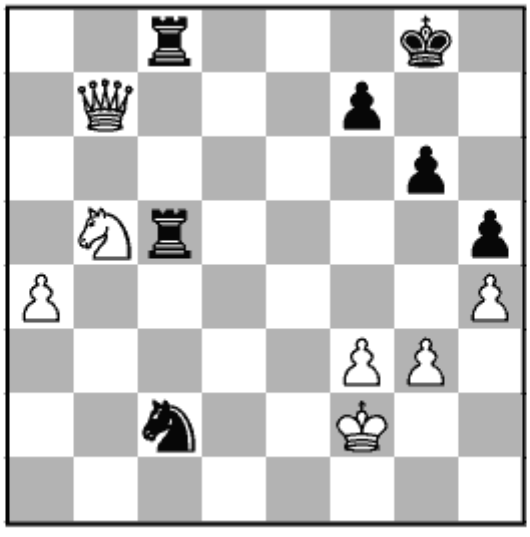
38 Nc4 Rxa4 39 Ne5 Rga6 40 Nxg4

Not 40 Rxb7? Ra1+ 41 Kf2 R6a2+, mating.

40…Ra2

with an unclear position.

back



Solution 176: Black to play

J.Watson – A.Katz (variation)

Burlingame 2019

To make the right choice, it is sufficient to calculate 45…Nb4? and to see why it fails.

45…Rf8!

Not 45…Nb4? 46 Nd6!, when a little analysis shows that a few checks won't save Black from defeat: 46…Rc2+ 47 Ke3 R8c3+ 48 Ke4! (48 Kf4? is wrong because it allows a knight check, after which Black can safely put a rook on c7: 48… Nd3+ 49 Kg5 Rc7 =) 48…Re2+ 49 Kf4 Nd3+ 50 Kg5 with a decisive advantage: 50…Ne5 51 Kh6 +–.

46 a5 Nb4 47 Nd6

After 47 a6 Rc2+ 48 Kf1 Rc1+ 49 Kg2 Rc2+ 50 Kh3 Nd3! White cannot avoid perpetual check: 51 a7 Nf2+ 52 Kg2 Nd3+ =.

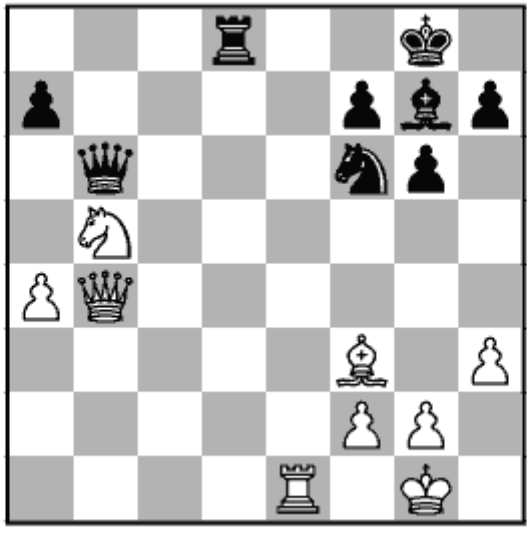
47…Rc2+ 48 Kg1 Nd3

The position is objectively drawn, although Black still needs to play well.

back

4: Getting Tricky

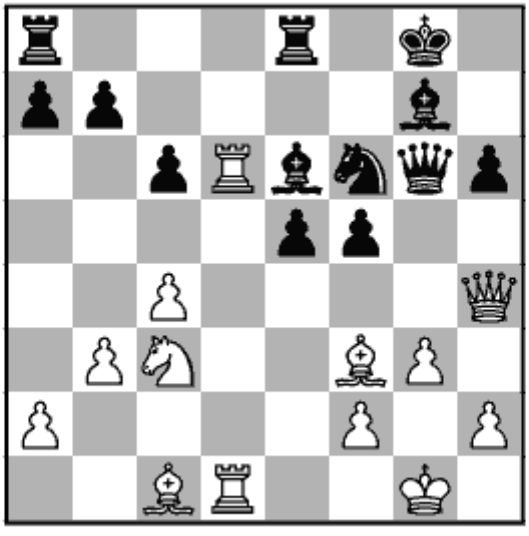
In this chapter we have 51 puzzles, all of difficulty level 3 – nothing trivial, but nothing excessively hard either. Theme-wise, there is a bit of everything here, with the exception of endgames – see the next chapter for that. Each diagram comes with a hint or question that may help point you in the right direction. At any rate, it is never intended to confuse you!



Puzzle 177: Black to play

Black can win, but it’s not as easy as it might appear.

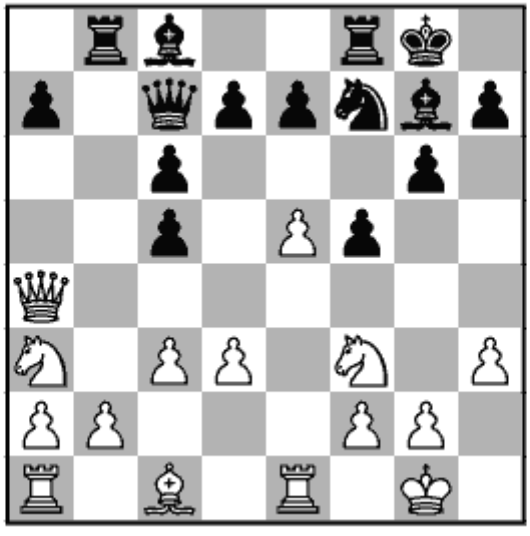
answer



Puzzle 178: White to play

How can White strengthen his position?

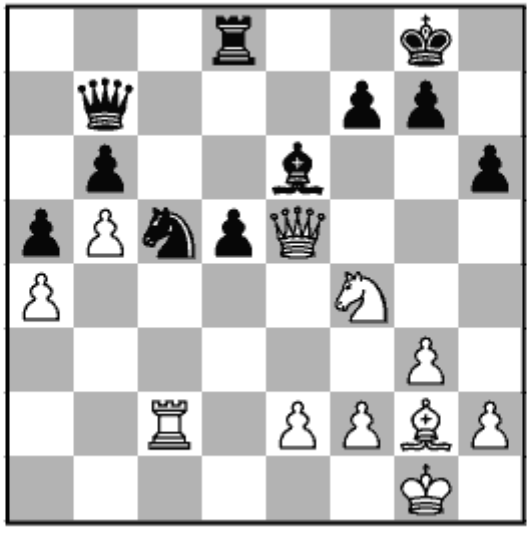
answer



Puzzle 179: Black to play

Can Black take the e5-pawn? If so, with which piece?

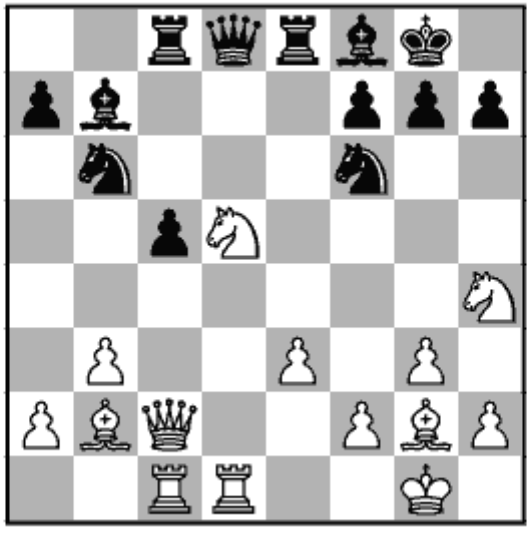
answer



Puzzle 180: White to play

White only managed to draw this game. Could he have won?

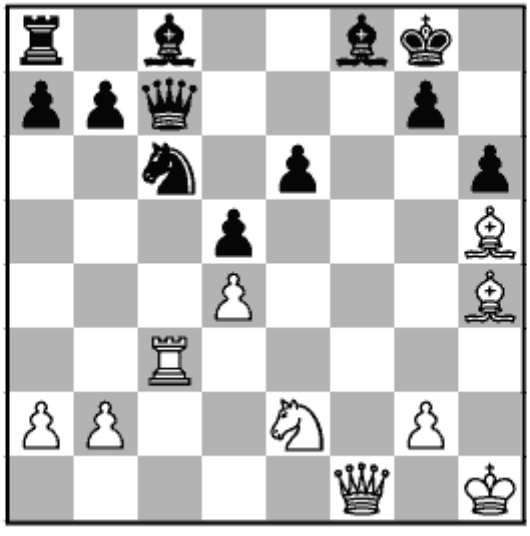
answer



Puzzle 181: Black to play

Which way should Black take on d5 to avoid ending up a pawn behind?

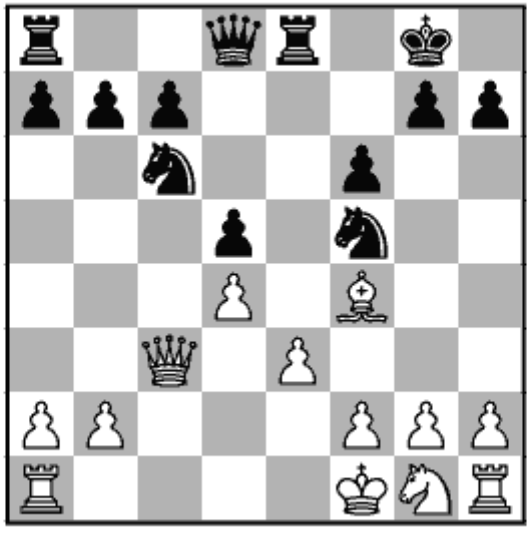
answer



Puzzle 182: Black to play

Black must be careful here: in the game he blundered it all away with his next move. What should he play?

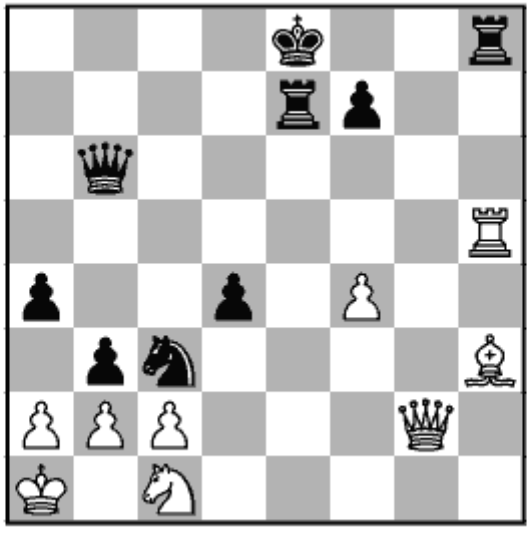
answer



Puzzle 183: Black to play

Black has a development advantage. How can he seize the initiative?

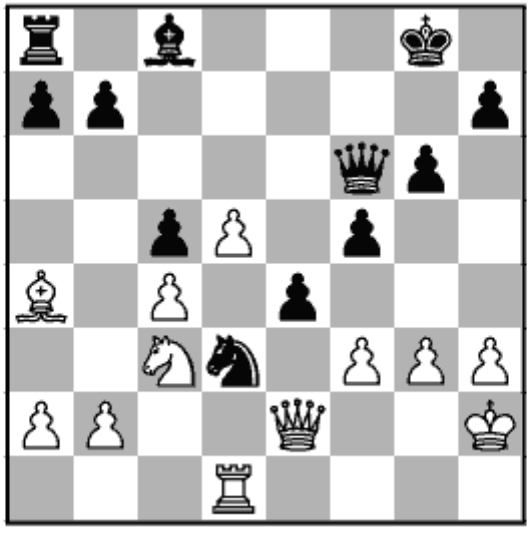
answer



Puzzle 184: Black to play

White has just exchanged bishops on e7 and grabbed a pawn on h5. What should Black do?

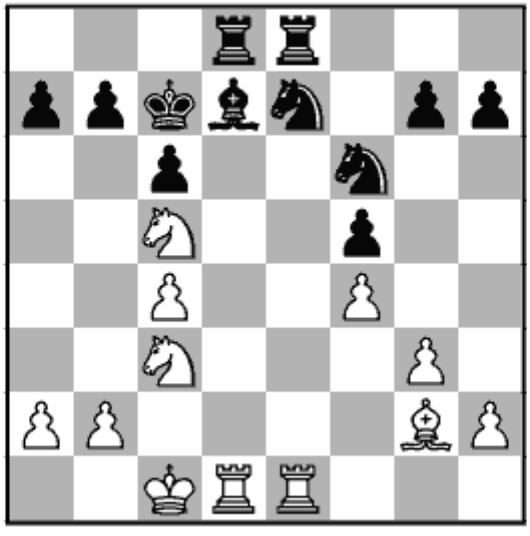
answer



Puzzle 185: Black to play

The e4-pawn can’t be supported. So what should Black do?

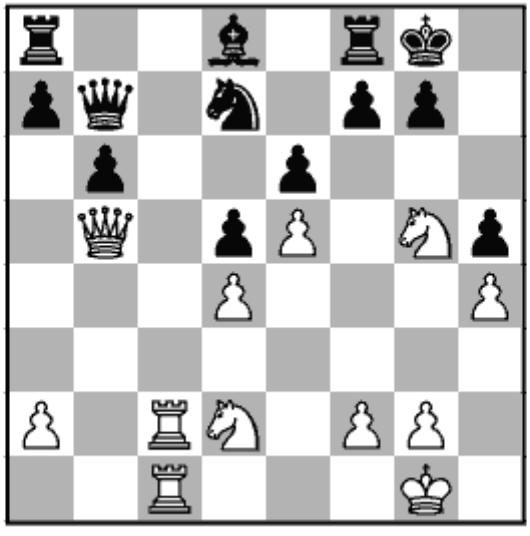
answer



Puzzle 186: White to play

White found the best move and secured a big advantage. What did he play?

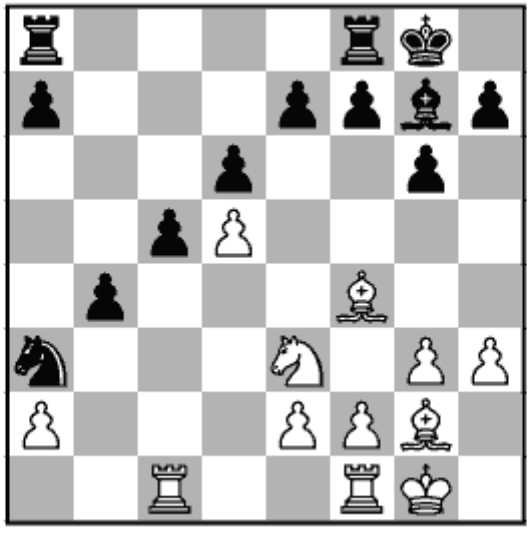
answer



Puzzle 187: White to play

White has active pieces, but how should he keep the advantage?

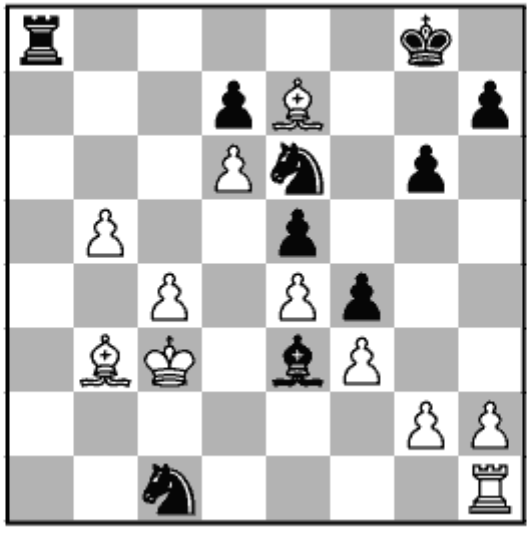
answer



Puzzle 188: Black to play

Black is a piece down, but with an accurate move here he can fight for victory.

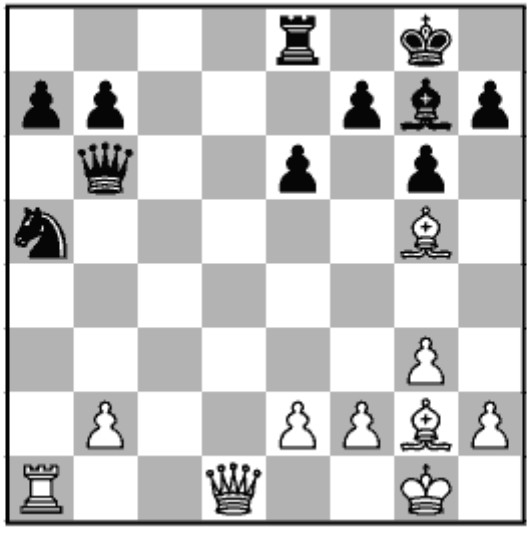
answer



Puzzle 189: White to play

At first glance White's game seems hopeless, but he has a way to draw.

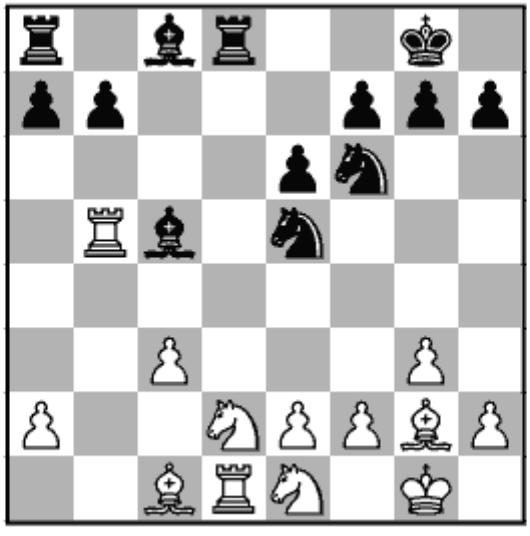
answer



Puzzle 190: White to play

White won comfortably. How?

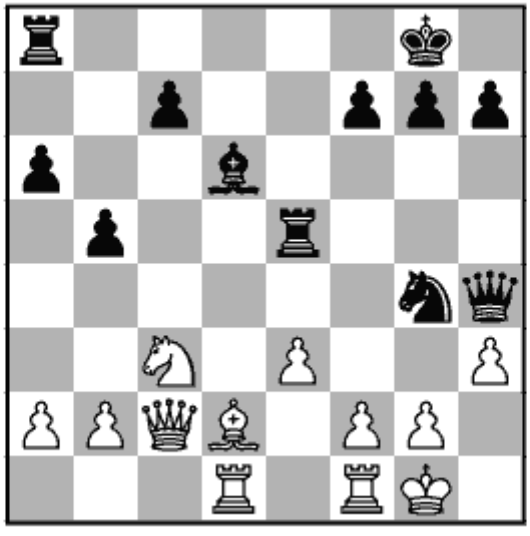
answer



Puzzle 191: Black to play

White has just played 13 Rb1-b5?. How did Black punish this error?

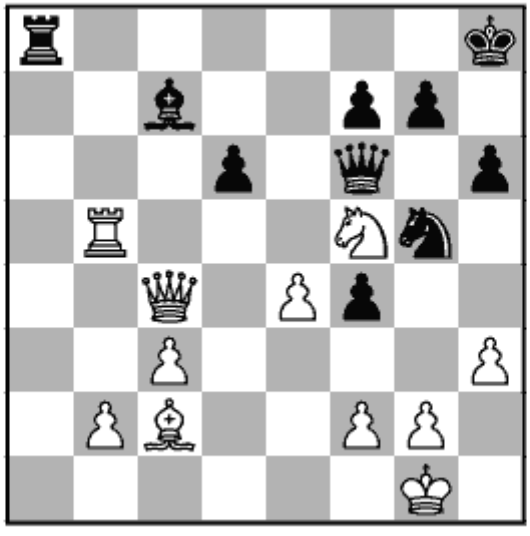
answer



Puzzle 192: White to play

White found the best move and won the game. What was it?

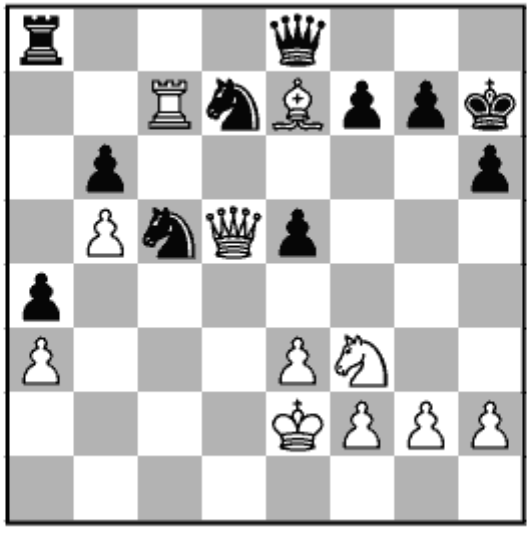
answer



Puzzle 193: Black to play

White's pieces are a long way from their king. How can this be exploited?

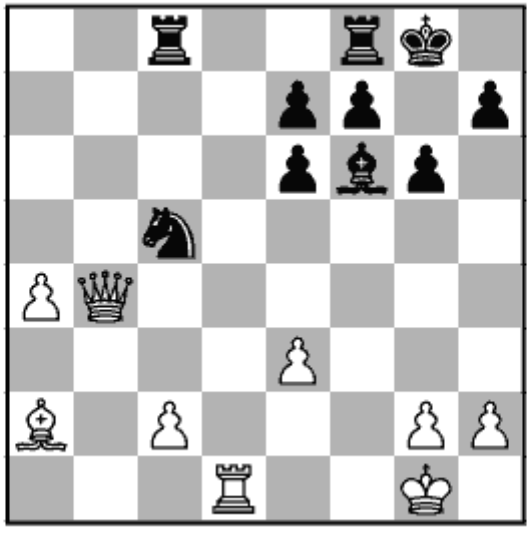
answer



Puzzle 194: White to play

How should White strengthen his position?

answer



Puzzle 195: Black to play

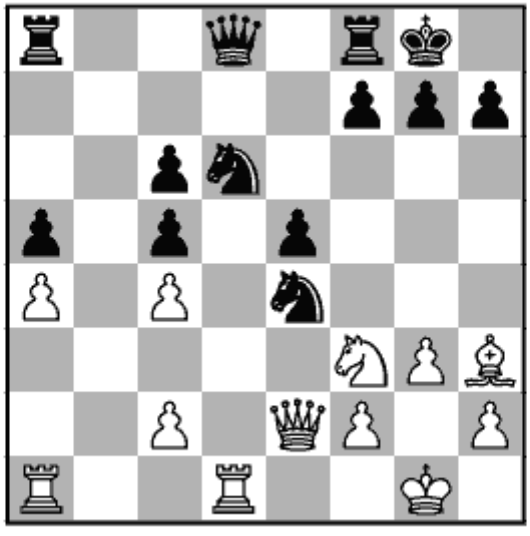
White's a-pawn looks dangerous. Can Black eliminate it right away?

answer

Puzzle 196: White to play

White won quickly. How?

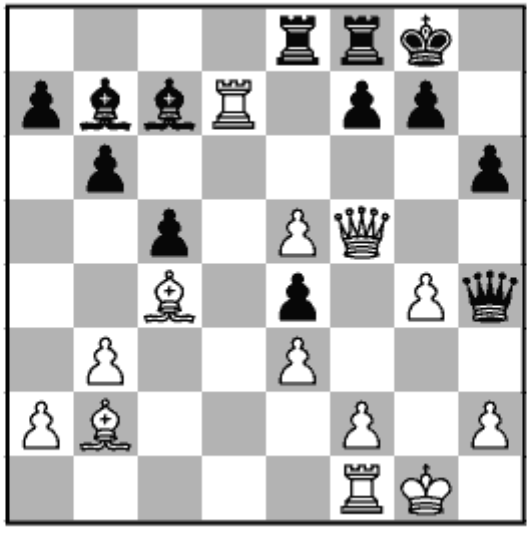
answer



Puzzle 197: White to play

Does White have a way to exploit the pin on the d-file?

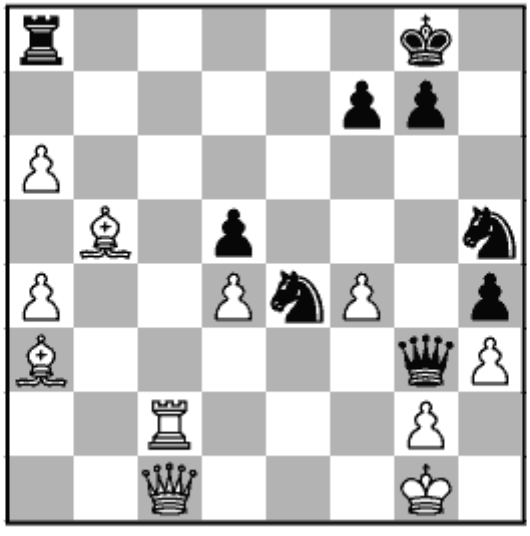
answer



Puzzle 198: Black to play

Black won the game in just a few moves. How?

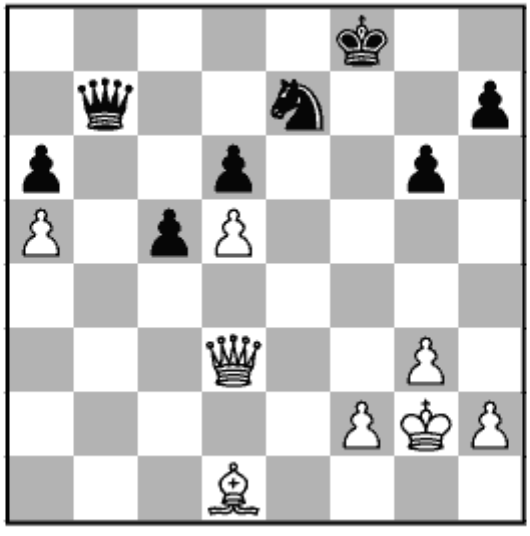
answer



Puzzle 199: White to play

White's next move in the game allowed perpetual check. Show how he could have avoided that and won.

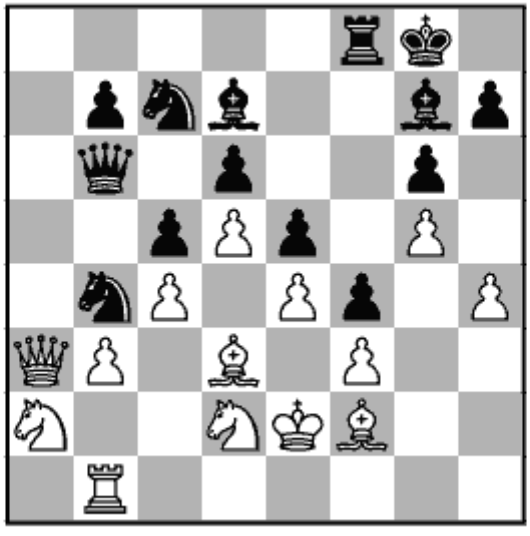
answer



Puzzle 200: White to play

White has a very promising position, but there's only one way to win right away.

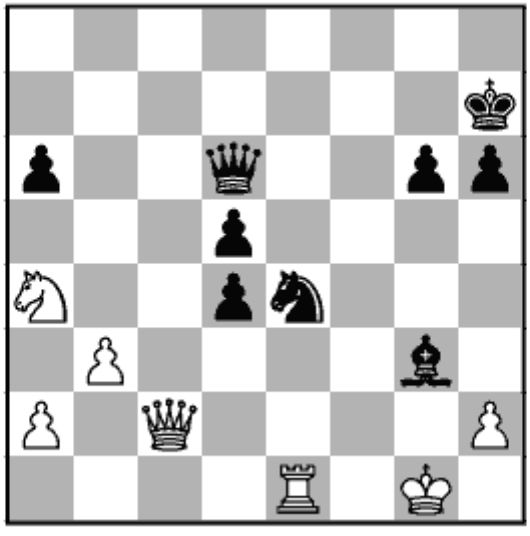
answer



Puzzle 201: White to play

White would clearly like to remove the black knight from b4. But think carefully about how to do so.

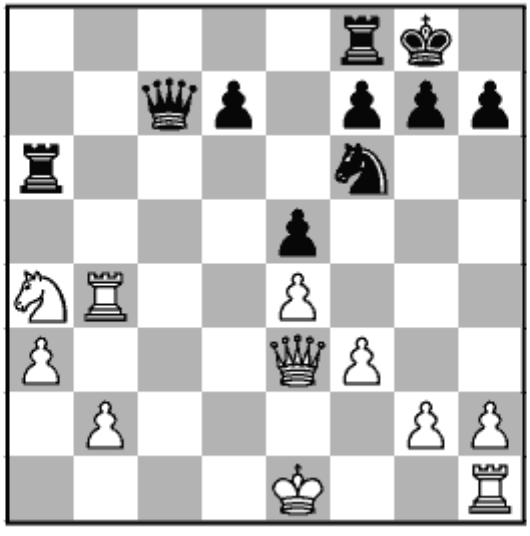
answer



Puzzle 202: White to play

Black has just landed a blow on the kingside. Your task is to find an accurate defence for White.

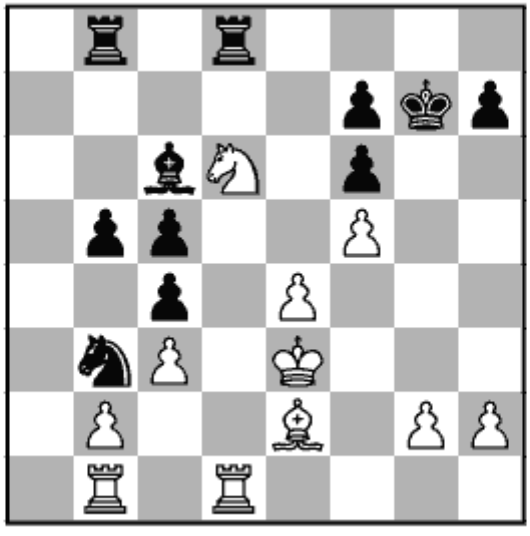
answer



Puzzle 203: Black to play

White's king is still in the centre. Can Black take advantage of this?

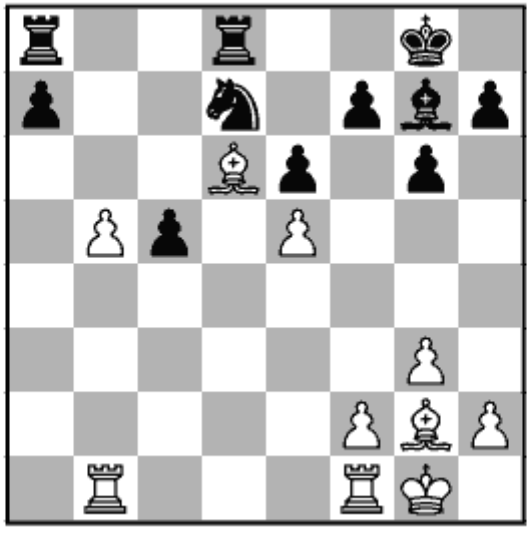
answer



Puzzle 204: Black to play

How can Black secure a big advantage?

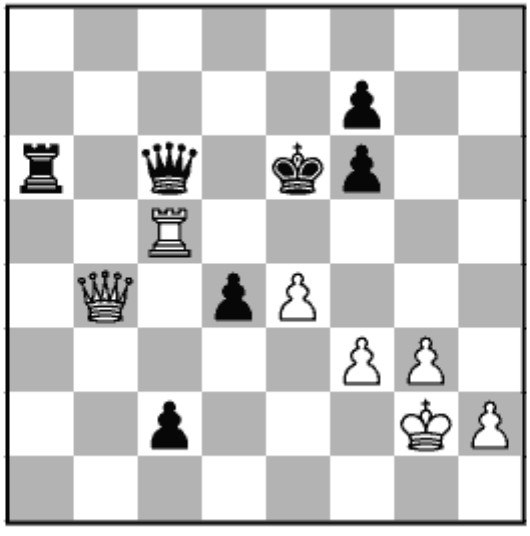
answer



Puzzle 205: Black to play

It looks like Black must lose an exchange. But maybe it's not so bad?

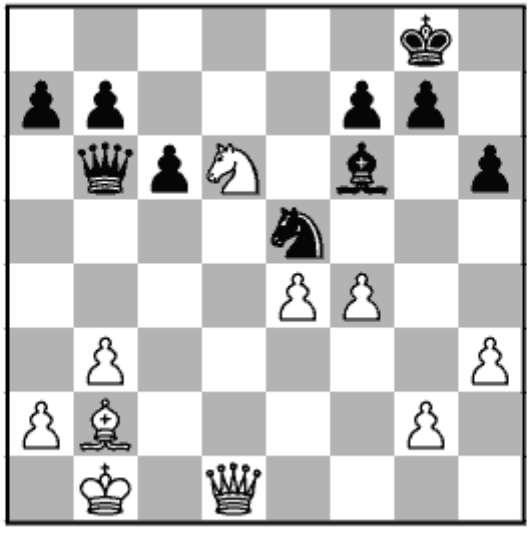
answer



Puzzle 206: White to play

How should White press home his advantage?

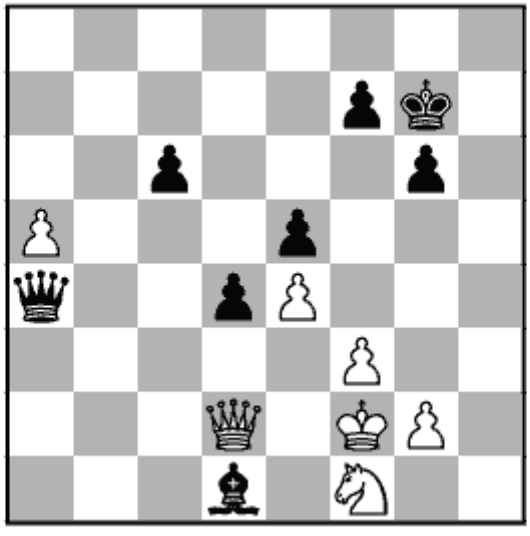
answer



Puzzle 207: Black to play

It seems necessary to retreat the knight from e5. But to where?

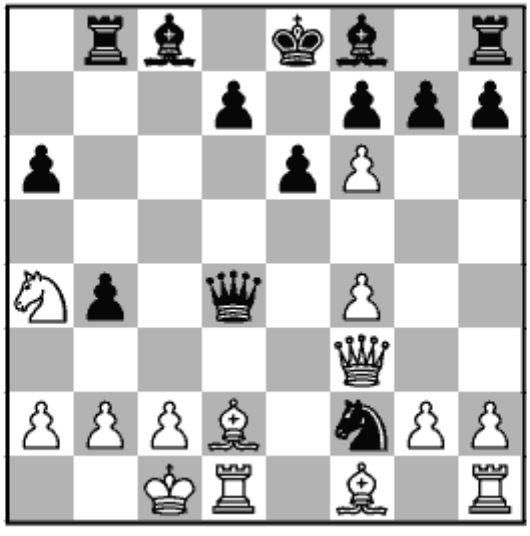
answer



Puzzle 208: White to play

How can White strengthen his position?

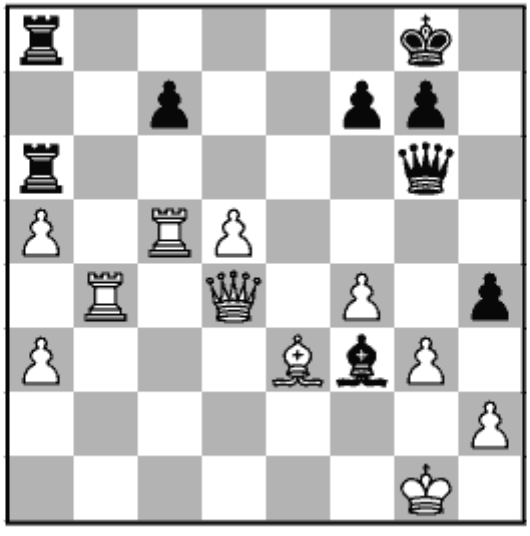
answer



Puzzle 209: White to play

Find the best move and carefully calculate the variations that follow.

answer



Puzzle 210: White to play

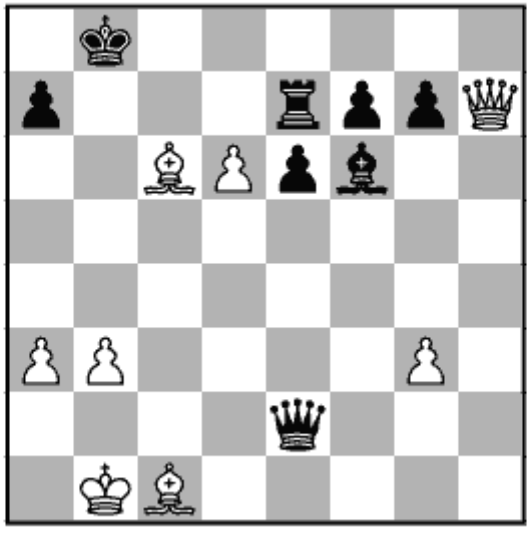
Black is trying to create counterplay. How should White react?

answer

Puzzle 211: Black to play

A pawn sacrifice drags White's bishop into a pin.

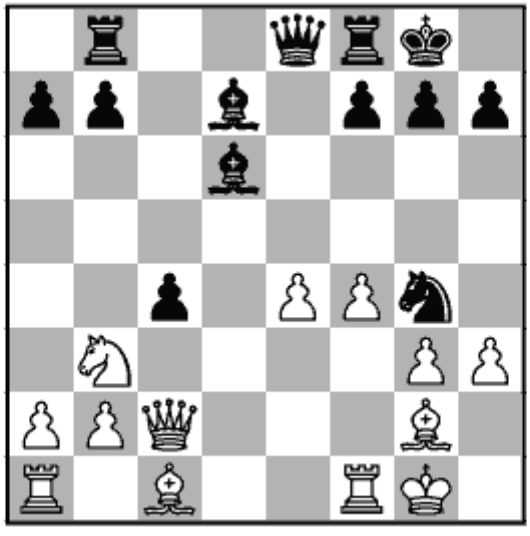
answer



Puzzle 212: Black to play

Black can not only avoid losing, but he can win!

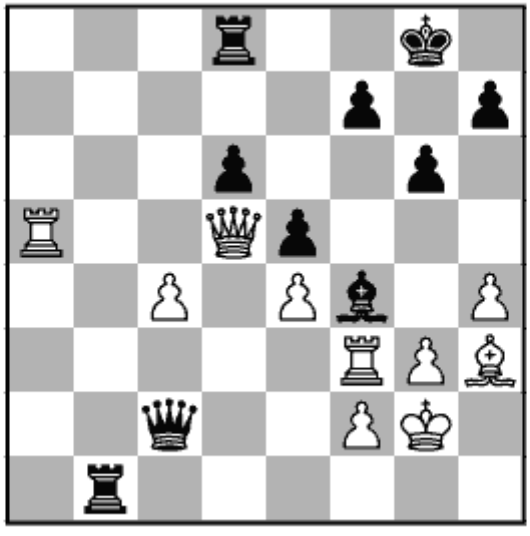
answer



Puzzle 213: White to play

White can take on g4 or c4, or move his knight. Which option is best?

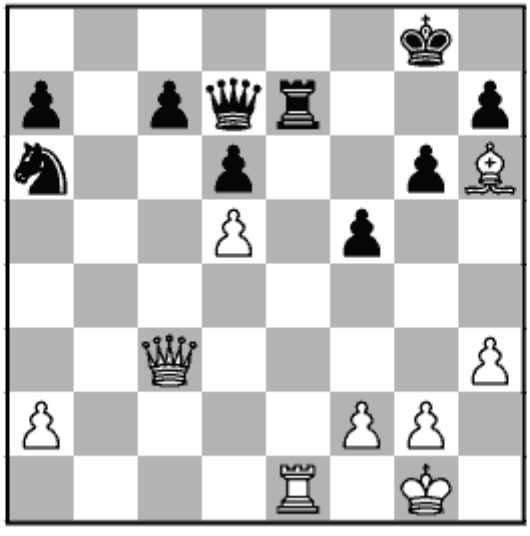
answer



Puzzle 214: White to play

Black has just refused to retreat his threatened bishop and instead moved in for a counterattack. What should White do now?

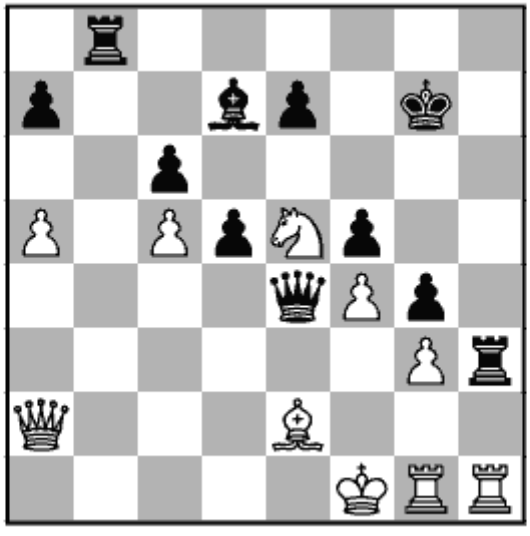
answer



Puzzle 215: White to play

How should White continue his attack?

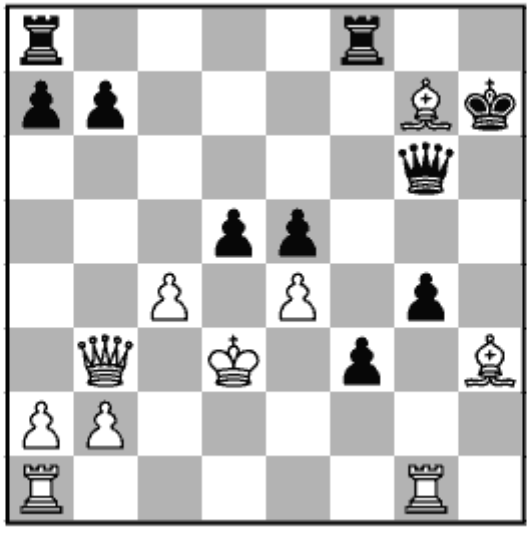
answer



Puzzle 216: White to play

Calculate the options and find the best continuation.

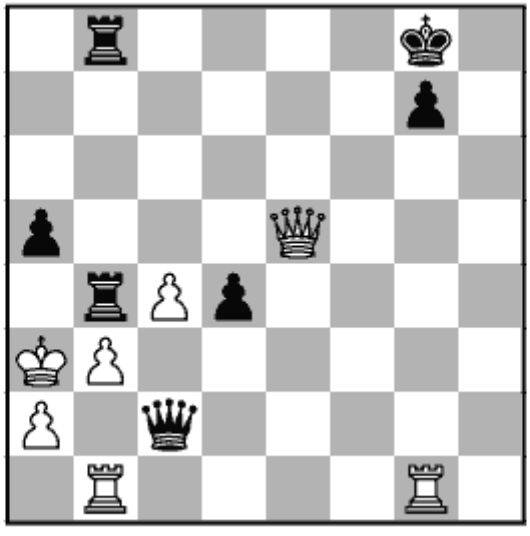
answer



Puzzle 217: Black to play

An unusually crazy-looking position. Can Black win?

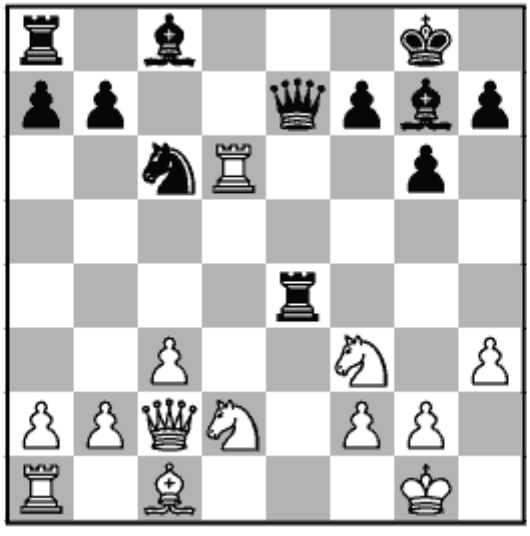
answer



Puzzle 218: Black to play

White threatens mate. How should Black defend?

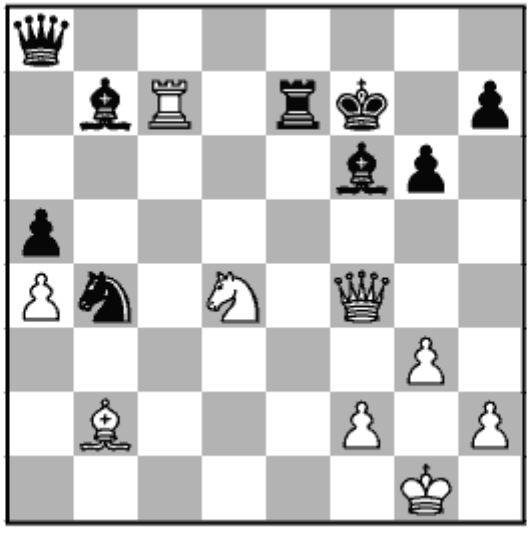
answer



Puzzle 219: Black to play

Show how Black secures good compensation for his missing pawn.

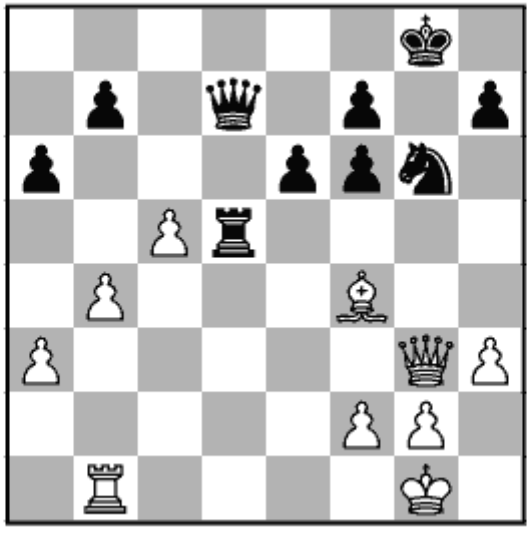
answer



Puzzle 220: White to play

White is attacking, but does he have a way to win the game?

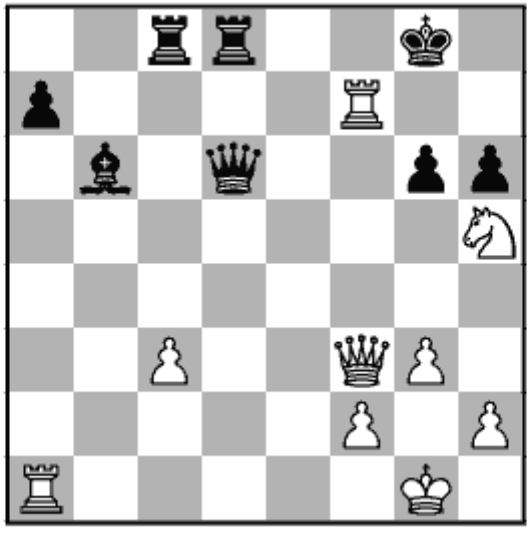
answer



Puzzle 221: White to play

Find the best move and assess the position.

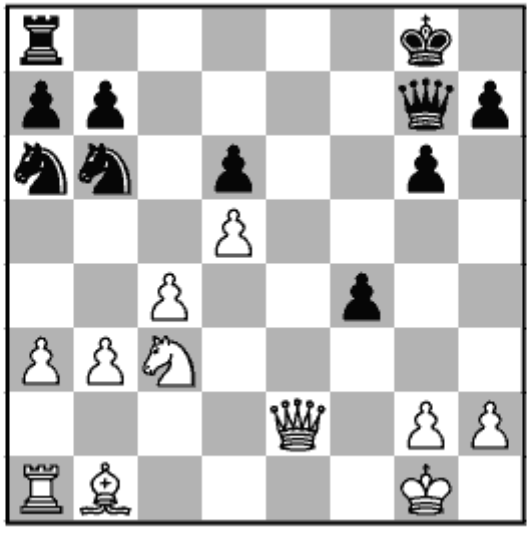
answer



Puzzle 222: Black to play

Can Black take the knight on h5?

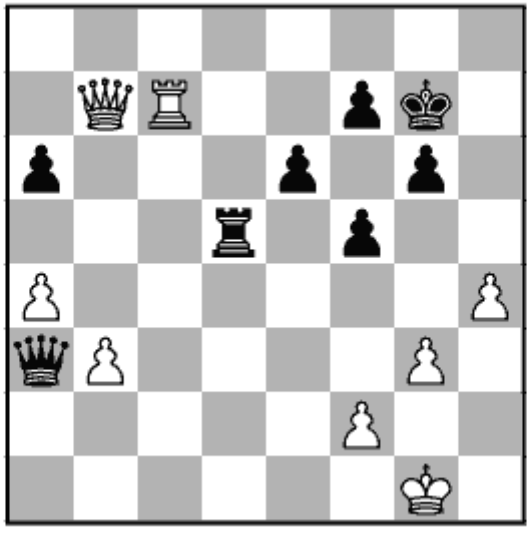
answer



Puzzle 223: White to play

The knight is loose on c3. How should White defend himself?

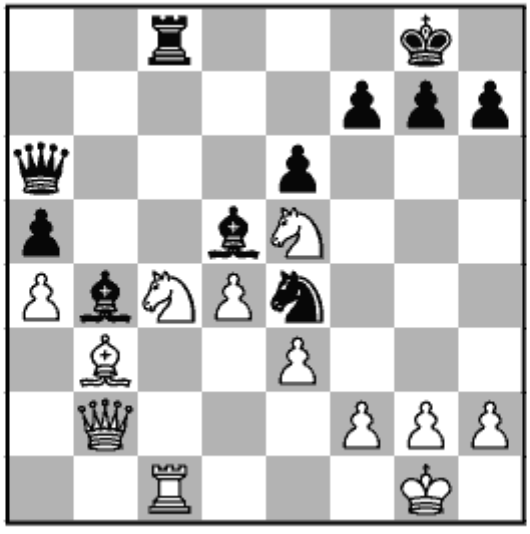
answer



Puzzle 224: Black to play

Two pawns are under attack. How should Black defend?

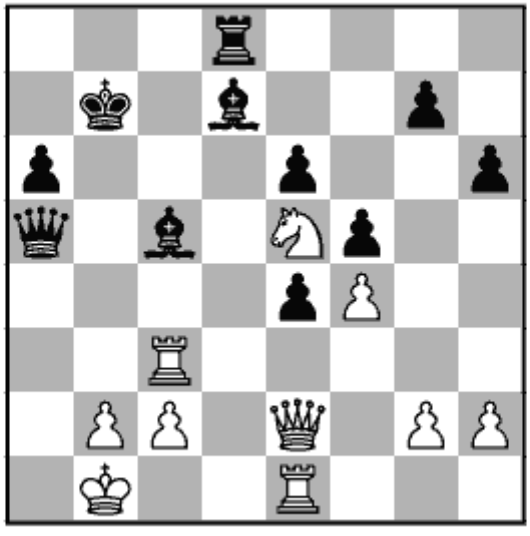
answer



Puzzle 225: White to play

Evaluate the position and find the best move.

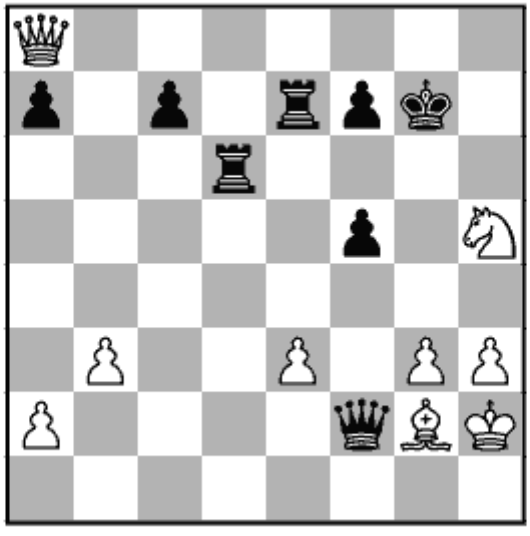
answer



Puzzle 226: Black to play

Black can win back the exchange, but to keep an advantage he must play accurately.

answer

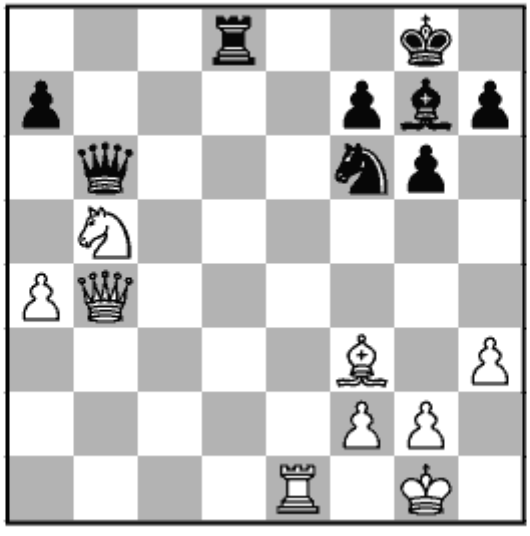


Puzzle 227: Black to play

Black has a material advantage, but if he is to make any use of it, he needs to look after his king.

answer

Solutions for Chapter 4



Solution 177: Black to play

Talyansky – Ezra (variation)

Burlingame 2019

I am sure you saw that the pinned white knight cannot escape, but the tricky point was how to handle White's a-pawn.

26…a6 27 a5 Qb8!

Not 27…Qxb5? 28 Qxb5 axb5 29 a6, when White will regain the piece: 29…Nd7 30 Rd1 (30 a7!? Nb6 31 Rb1) 30…Bf6 31 a7 Nb6 32 Rxd8+ Bxd8 33 a8Q with a drawn position.

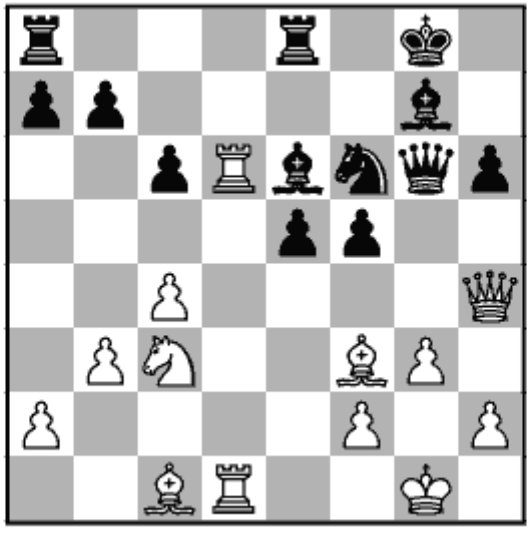
28 Rb1 axb5 29 a6

After 29 Qxb5 Qxb5 30 Rxb5 Rd2 Black can stop the pawn getting to a7: 31 a6 Ra2 –+.

29…Ne8 30 Qxb5 Qc7

Black has a decisive advantage. On **31 Qb7** there follows **31… Bd4 –+**.

back



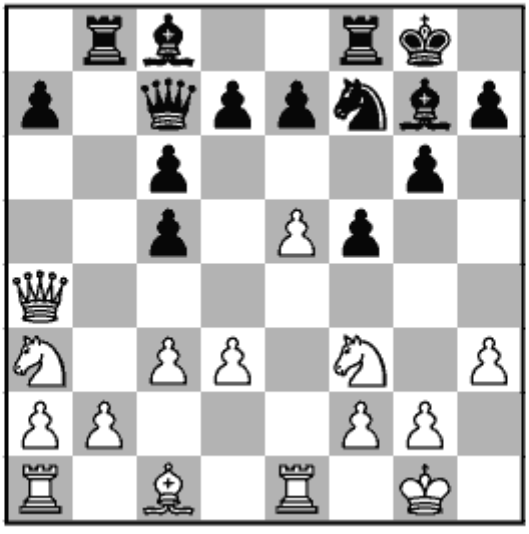
Solution 178: White to play

Kavinda – Balasubramaniam

Mumbai 2018/19

Transferring the knight to c5 gives Black serious problems: **22 Na4! Bf8** (22…Re7 23 Bb2!? {23 Nc5 +/–} 23…Bf7 24 Nc5 +/–) **23 Nc5! Bxd6 24 Rxd6 Rad8!** (the only way to fight on, though it is unlikely to save Black; after 24…Kf7?, as played in the game, 25 Nd3 +– gives White a decisive plus, while 24…e4? loses to 25 Be2 Rad8 26 Rxd8 Rxd8 27 Nxe6 since the knight can escape to the f4-square thanks to Black having played …e4) **25 Rxd8 Rxd8 26 Nxe6 Rd6 27 Nc5 b6 28 Na4** with a large advantage and excellent winning chances.

back



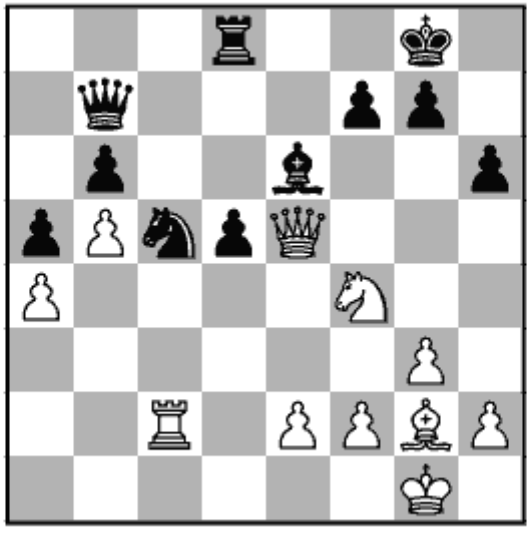
Solution 179: Black to play

Mohota – Vantika Agrawal

Mumbai 2018/19

Yes, though some calculation is needed to see which way is safer: **12…Nxe5!?** (weaker is 12…Bxe5?! 13 Nxe5 Nxe5 14 Bg5 +/–) **13 Nxe5 Bxe5 14 Rxe5 Qxe5 15 Bf4 Rb4!** (thanks to this move, Black is fine) **16 cxb4** (16 Qxb4 cxb4 17 Bxe5 bxa3 =) **16…Qxf4** with an unclear position.

back



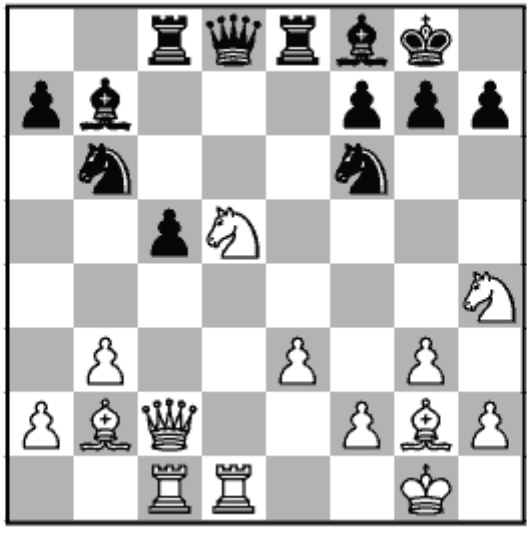
Solution 180: White to play

Senthil – Mahindrakar

Mumbai 2018/19

Removing the c5-knight means that Black can't meet Nh5 with …f6: **34 Rxc5! bxc5 35 Nh5 Kf8 36 Qxg7+** (now White has a decisive advantage, and can win in a number of ways) **36…Ke7** (36…Ke8 37 Nf6+ Ke7 38 Qxh6 +–) **37 f4** (37 Qxh6!? +–) **37…c4 38 Qf6+ Kd7 39 f5 +–**.

back



Solution 181: Black to play

Shetty – Somalwar

Burlingame 2019

18…Nfxd5!

Not:

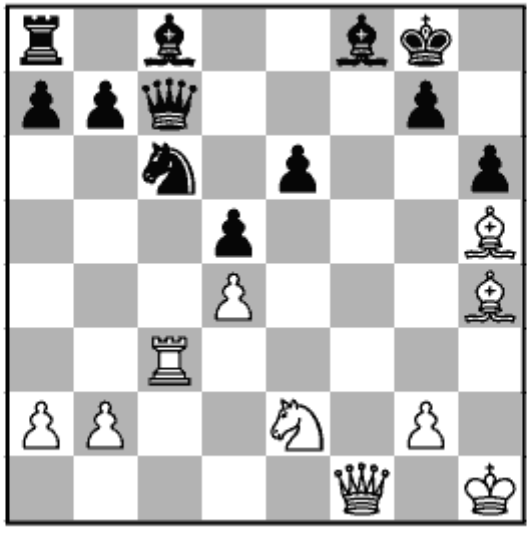
a) 18…Nbxd5?! 19 Bxf6 gxf6 20 e4 +/–.

b) 18…Bxd5?! 19 Bxf6 Bxb3 (19…Qxf6 20 Bxd5 +/–) 20 Rxd8 Bxc2 21 Rxe8 Rxe8 and now 22 Bxg7! wins a pawn: 22…Bxg7 23 Rxc2 +/– (as played in the game).

19 e4 Qd7!? 20 exd5 Bxd5

Black is OK. The game is close to equal.

back



Solution 182: Black to play

Dushyant – R.Prajesh

Mumbai 2018/19

Black needs to open a path for his light-squared bishop right away.

21…e5!

After 21…Bd6? 22 Rf3 +– Black does not have time to develop his pieces, and White's kingside attack quickly becomes decisive:

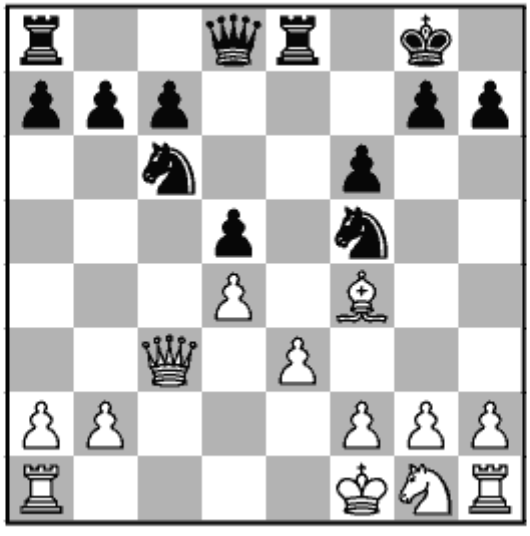
a) 22…Nd8 23 Nf4 Qc4 (23…Bd7 24 Ng6 +–) 24 Nd3 (simpler is 24 Qxc4!? dxc4 25 Bxd8 +–) 24…Bd7 25 Bg3! +–.

b) The game continued 22…Bd7 23 Rf7 Nd8 (23…Rf8 24 Rxf8+ Bxf8 25 Qf7+ +–) 24 Rxg7+ Kxg7 25 Qf6+ with mate in a few moves.

22 dxe5 Be6 =+

Black has an excellent position. The transfer of the white rook to the f-file is no longer very scary for Black.

back



Solution 183: Black to play

Nepal – Tarun

Mumbai 2018/19

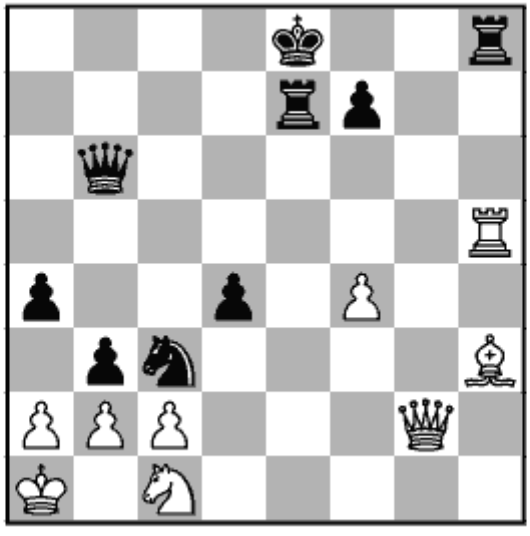
13…g5! 14 Bg3 h5 15 Qd3

White's bishop is short of squares, and he can't even move his h-pawn to save it: 15 h3?! Rxe3 16 fxe3 Nxg3+ –+.

15…Qd7 16 Ne2 h4 17 Bxc7 Rac8 –+

Black wins a piece.

back



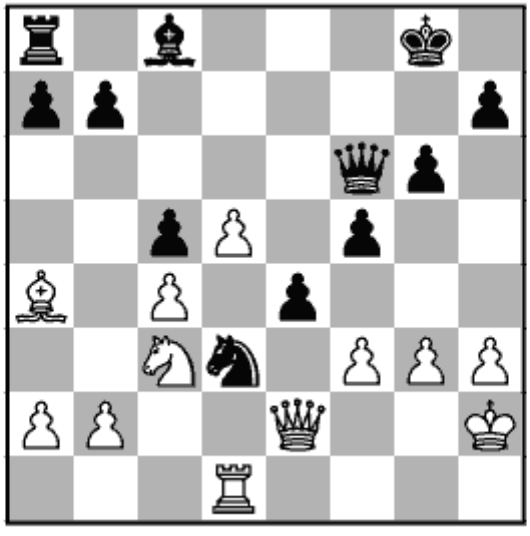
Solution 184: Black to play

Kravtsiv – Saptarshi (variation)

New Delhi 2012

After **30…Re1!** (there's no time to move the rook from h8: 30…Rf8? 31 Qa8+ Qd8 32 Qc6+ with mate in a few moves) **31 Rxh8+ Ke7** White has no more than perpetual check: **32 Qg5+** (not 32 Qd2? Rd1 –+) **32…Qf6 33 Qc5+ Qd6 34 Qg5+ Qf6 =**.

back



Solution 185: Black to play

Wang Zideng – Wang Xiaoyan

Tianjin 2018/19

23…Ne5!

In the game Black played 23…f4? but after 24 g4! +– he was in deep trouble.

24 f4

Now the game is roughly equal. The main point is that the thematic pawn sacrifice 24 fxe4? f4 –/+ gives Black a dangerous attack. For example: 25 Rf1 fxg3+ 26 Kxg3?! Qg5+ 27 Kh2 Qh6 –+.

24…Nd3

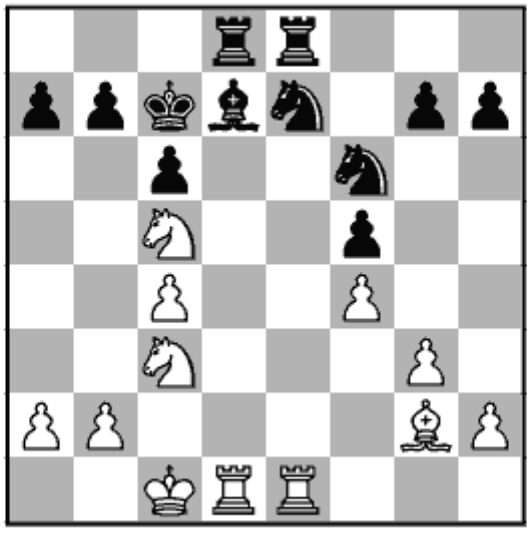
24…Nf3+!? is not bad either, but after 25 Kg2 Black needs to deal with the threat of Nxe4.

25 Rd2

25 Rxd3 exd3 26 Qxd3 b6 is unclear.

25…Qg7 26 Nd1 Bd7 =

back



Solution 186: White to play

H.Hesse – Gjestemoen-VonHirsch

Stockholm 2018/19

White needs to transfer the knight from c3 to d4.

19 Ne2!

19 Re5? Bc8 and Black is fine.

19…b6

After 19…Nc8 20 Nd4 Rxe1 21 Rxe1 Black loses a pawn due to the threat of 22 N(either)e6+; e.g., 21…Re8 22 Rxe8 Nxe8 23 Nxd7 +–.

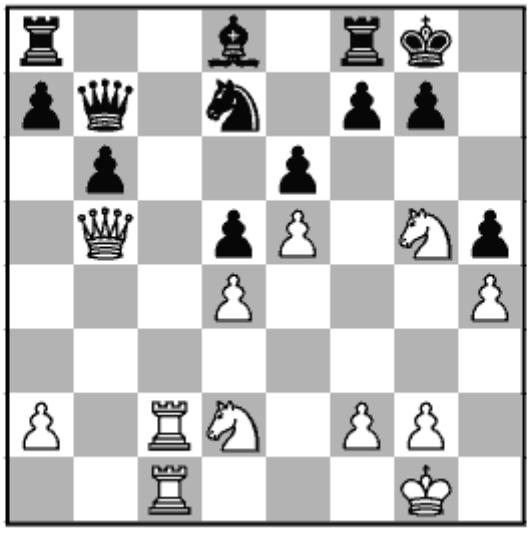
20 Nxd7 Nxd7

20…Rxd7 21 Nd4 +–.

21 Nd4 Nf8 22 Re5 g6

Now 23 b4!? +– is good, while after **23 Kc2 +–** (as played in the game) Black cannot break the pin without losing pawns: **23…a6** is met by **24 b4**.

back



Solution 187: White to play

Mi Tenglong – Lu Miaoyi

Tianjin 2018/19

The priority for White is to maintain a powerful knight on g5.

20 Ndf3!

20 Qd3? is no good because 20…Bxg5 leaves White nothing better than 21 hxg5 Rfc8 = since after 21 Rc7? Qb8 (as played in the game) 22 hxg5 Black wins with 22…Nc5!.

20…g6

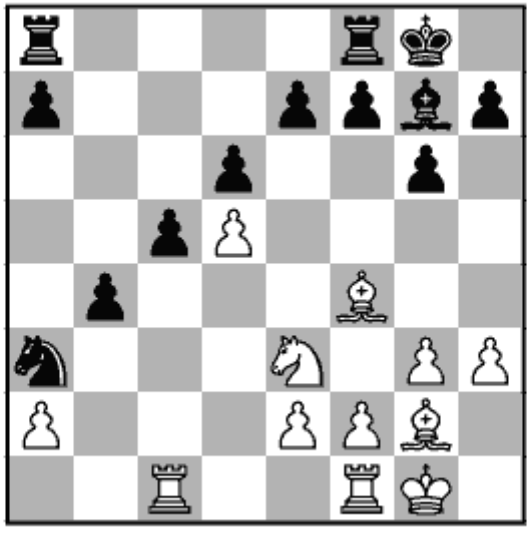
Other moves lose on the spot: 20…Bxg5? 21 Rc7! Qb8 22 Nxg5 +–; 20…Re8? 21 Rc7 Bxc7 22 Qxd7 +–; 20…a6? 21 Qd3 g6 22 Nxe6 +–.

21 Qb4 +–

With these two accurate moves, White has solved his logistical problem and has a strategically won game: **21…Re8** (21… Bxg5 22 Nxg5 Rac8 23 Qd6 +– with a decisive invasion of the seventh rank) **22 Qd2** (there's a more complex solution in 22 Nxf7!? Kxf7 23 Qd6 +– with the deadly threat of 24 Rc7)

22…Nf8 23 g4! gives White a decisive attack. **23…hxg4** fails due to **24 Nh2**.

back



Solution 188: Black to play

Guan Runpei – Mi Tenglong

Tianjin 2018/19

The priority is to pave the way for the c-pawn's advance.

21…Bb2!

Now White must give up the exchange or allow the pawn to move forward. Instead 21…Bc3?! is too slow: 22 Nc2 += (or 22 Nd1) and now 22…Bb2?! can be met by 23 Nxa3!.

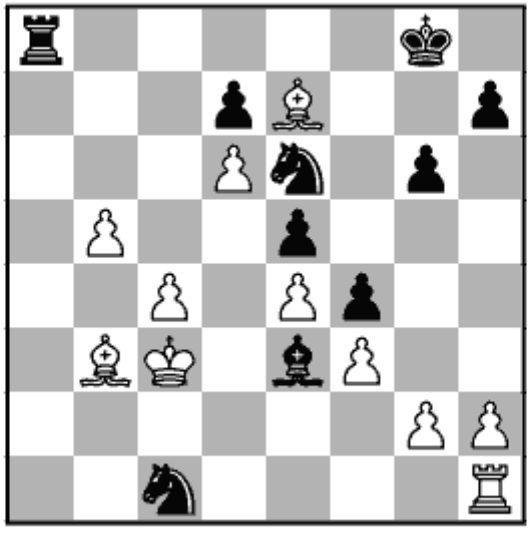
22 Rcd1?!

Not 22 Nc4? Bxc1 23 Rxc1 Nxc4 24 Rxc4 (played in the game) 24…a5 –+, but White should try 22 Rc4!? Bf6 23 h4 Nxc4 24 Nxc4 a5 =+.

22…c4

Black has an advantage and good winning chances, as his queenside pawns are extremely dangerous.

back



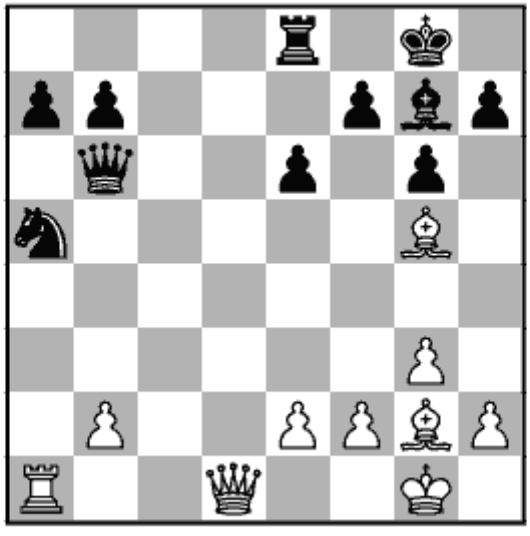
Solution 189: White to play

Royal – Eames

Hastings 2018/19

Far-advanced pawns sometimes prove a match for a whole rook! **33 Rxc1! Bxc1 34 c5 Kf7 35 c6 Rc8 36 c7** (36 Bd5!? =) **36…Be3 37 Bd5** and now Black will have to give up his rook, which will lead to a drawn position. For example: **37…Bb6** (37…Ke8 38 Bb7 was agreed drawn in the game in view of 38…Rxc7+ 39 dxc7 Nxc7 40 Bb4 Nxb5+ 41 Kc4 =) **38 Bb7 Rxc7+ 39 dxc7 Nxc7 40 Bd8!?** (40 Bh4 Nxb5+ =+) **40… Nxb5+ 41 Kb4 Bxd8 42 Kxb5 =**.

back



Solution 190: White to play

Kobalia – Santos Ruiz

Stockholm 2018/19

White plays a number of moves with tempo, enabling him to win the black knight.

25 Qd7! Rf8

Other moves lose immediately: 25…Ra8 26 Be3 Qa6 27 Bd2 +–; 25…Rb8 26 Be3 Qb4 (26…Qa6 27 Qc7 +–) 27 Bd2 +–.

26 Be3 Qa6 27 Bc5

Also good is 27 b4!? Bxa1 28 b5 Qb6 29 Bxb6 axb6 30 Qd6! +–.

27…Bxb2

27…Ra8 loses to 28 Qc7 +–, while the game featured 27… Qxe2 28 Bf1 Qxb2 29 Rxa5 +–.

28 Bxf8 Bxa1 29 Bh6

Black will be mated.

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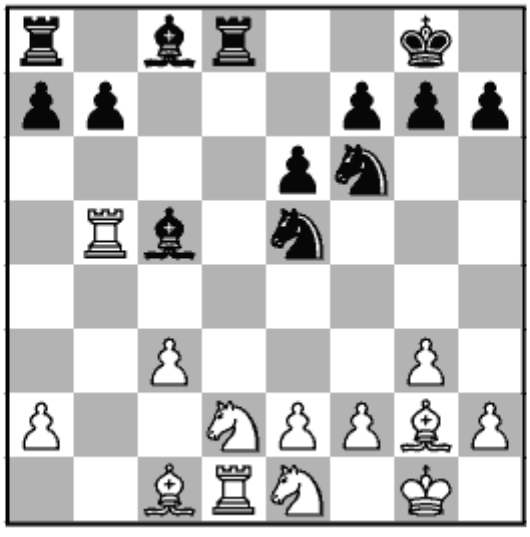


Solution 191: Black to play

Mendonca – Ertan

Stockholm 2018/19

Black has a powerful piece sacrifice based on the d1-rook's lack of flight-squares.

13…Bxf2+! 14 Kxf2 Neg4+

Not 14…Nfg4+? 15 Kg1 +=.

15 Kf3

Forced because 15 Kg1 allows 15…Ne3 –+, but with the king so exposed, Black has more than one way to win.

15…Bd7

Even stronger is 15…Nxh2+!? 16 Kf4 Bd7 17 Ra5 (17 Rxb7 Ba4 –+) 17…e5+! 18 Kxe5 (18 Rxe5 Ba4 –+) 18…Nhg4+ 19 Kf4 Nf2 –+ with an easy win.

16 Rb4

16 Ra5 Nxh2+ and Black wins after 17 Kf2 Nhg4+ 18 Kf3 Bc6+ 19 e4 Nxe4 –+ or 17 Kf4 e5+ 18 Kxe5 (18 Rxe5 Ba4 –+) 18…Nhg4+ 19 Kf4 Nf2 –+.

16…Nxh2+ 17 Kf2

17 Kf4 e5+ 18 Kxe5 Nhg4+ 19 Kf4 Nf2 –+.

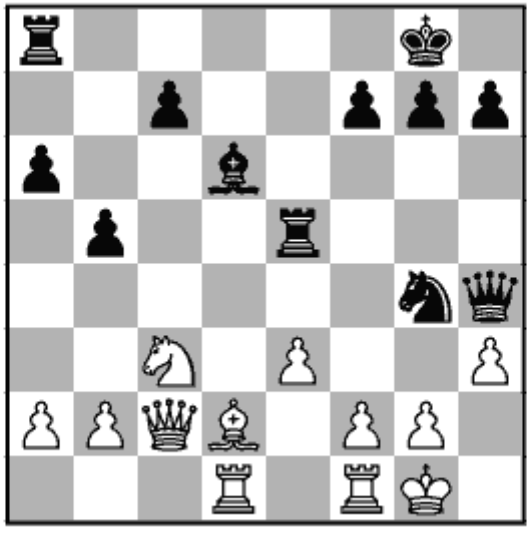
17…Nhg4+ 18 Kf3 Bc6+ 19 e4 Nxe4! 20 Rxe4 f5 21 Kf4

The game featured 21 Ke2 fxe4 –+.

21…Nf2 22 Rxe6 Bxg2 23 Nxg2 Nxd1 –+

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 192: White to play

Krishna Teja – Ertan

Stockholm 2018/19

The bishop on d6 is a key piece in Black's attack, so the correct move takes aim at it while also preparing a discovered attack on the black queen.

19 Be1!

Not 19 hxg4? Rxe3! (19…Rh5? 20 f4 +–) 20 f4 Rh3! 21 gxh3 Qg3+ = with perpetual check, while 19 e4?! Rc5 leaves White better, though a fight lies ahead.

19…Re6

Or: 19…Nf6 20 f4 +–; 19…Rh5 20 Rd4 (20 f3? Nxe3 =+) 20…f5 21 f3 +–.

20 Rxd6

The simplest path to victory. 20 Rd4!? was played in the game. Then:

a) 20…Bh2+ 21 Kh1 Be5 22 Qe4 +– (but not 22 Rxg4? Qxg4, when 23 hxg4?! Rh6+ is a draw).

b) 20…h5, as chosen in the game, is best met by 21 Qb1! +– and next move White will play 22 f3 and take the knight.

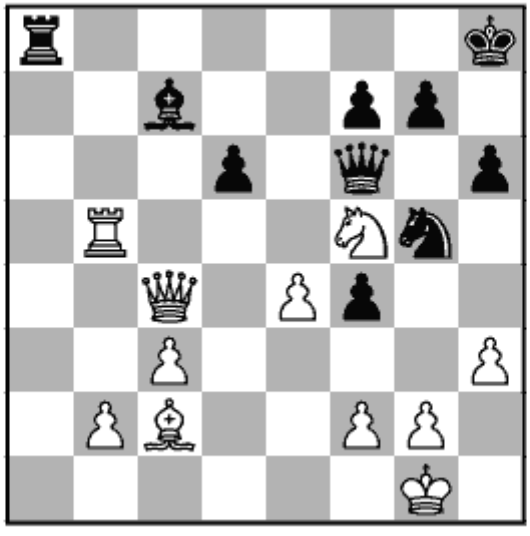
20…Rxd6

20…cxd6 21 hxg4 +–.

21 Qe4 +–

with a decisive material advantage.

back



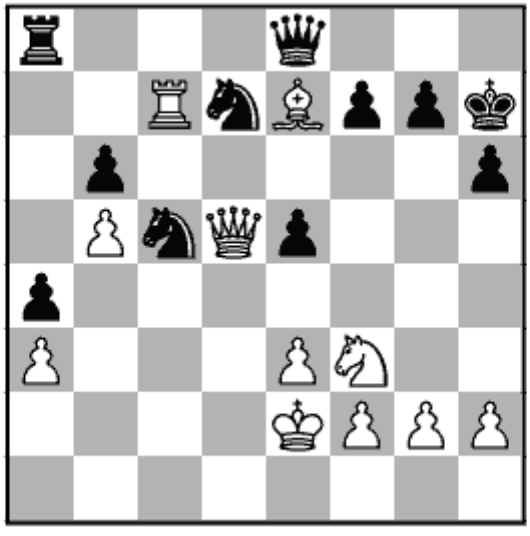
Solution 193: Black to play

Buchenau – Hø.Nielsen

Stockholm 2018/19

At first sight Black's position looks hopeless, but the poorly protected white king allows him to win with a beautiful combination. The game continued **36…Ra1+ 37 Kh2 Nf3+! 38 gxf3 Qg5! 39 Ng3** (or 39 h4 Qg1+ 40 Kh3 Qxf2 –+ with a mating attack) **39…fxg3+ 40 Kg2 Qd2 –+**. Then White's last chance is **41 Rb8+** with the point 41…Bxb8? 42 Qc8+ Kh7 43 Qf5+ =, but after **41…Kh7!**, he would have been forced to resign.

back



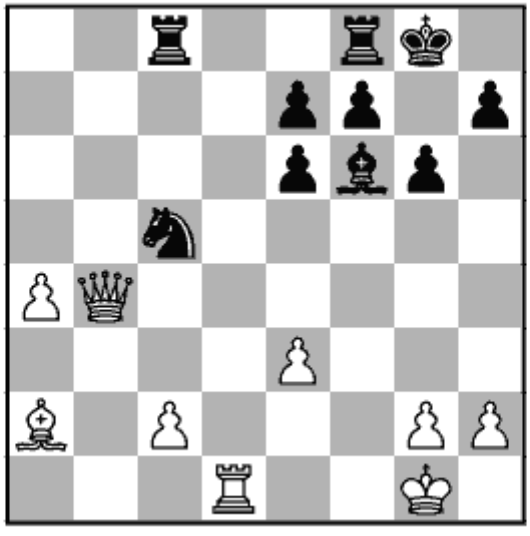
Solution 194: White to play

Luukkonen – Hammarström (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

His only piece that isn't playing a major role is the knight on f3, so it must be brought into the action: **27 Nd2!** (both 27 Bxc5? Nxc5 28 Qc6 e4 29 Nd4 Qe5! and 27 Bd6? Rd8 are OK for Black) **27…Ra5** (27…Rb8 28 Bd6 +–) **28 Nc4** (better than 28 Bxc5 Nxc5 29 Nc4 Rxb5 30 Rxf7, when White's advantage is of a more modest nature) **28…Rxb5 29 Qc6! Nf6** (29…Rb3 30 Bxc5 +–) **30 Bxf6 Qxc6 31 Rxc6 gxf6 32 Rxf6** and White is close to victory.

back



Solution 195: Black to play

An.Nielsen – Pantzar

Stockholm 2018/19

Yes, after **27…Nxa4!** the tactics work for Black. **28 Qxa4** (after 28 Bxe6 Nc3! 29 Bxc8 Nxd1 30 Ba6 {30 Qd2 Nxe3 is unclear} 30…Nxe3 White will not have time to advance his c-pawn, so Black will have a good position; e.g., 31 c4 Rd8 =+ or 31 Qd2 Nf5 32 Kf1 Ra8) **28…Ra8 29 Qb3** (29 Qe4 Rxa2 leaves Black no worse) **29…Rfb8 30 Qc4 Rc8 31 Qb3 Rcb8** = with a repetition of moves.

It is possible that Black can also survive after 27…Na6?! (as played in the game) 28 Qb6 Nc5 (28…Rxc2? 29 Bb1 +–) 29 Bb3 Nxb3, but this is far less clear-cut. If you see a chance to eliminate all danger, it is best to take it!

back

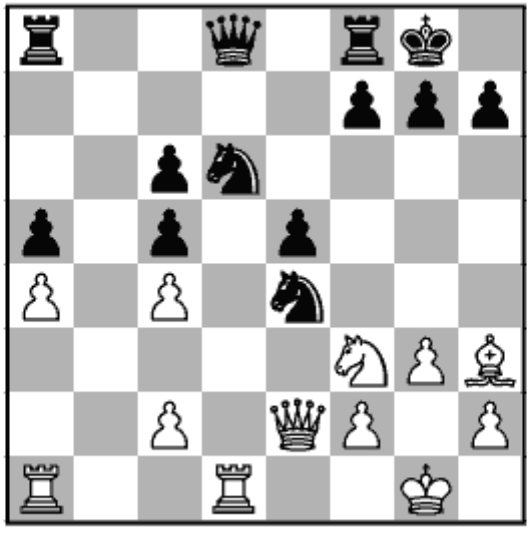
Solution 196: White to play

B.Lindberg – Calzetta Ruiz

Stockholm 2018/19

After **21 Qa4!** (21 b5?! Nd4 gives Black more chances to hang on, though he remains worse) White threatens to take the d7-pawn, and there is no good defence. For example: **21…Rd8** (21…cxb4 22 Rxd7 Qxd7 23 Bc6 +–) **22 Rad1! 0-0** (22… cxb4 23 Rxd7 Rxd7 24 Rxd7 +–) **23 Bxf5 exf5 24 Rxd7 +–** and Black resigned a few moves later.

back



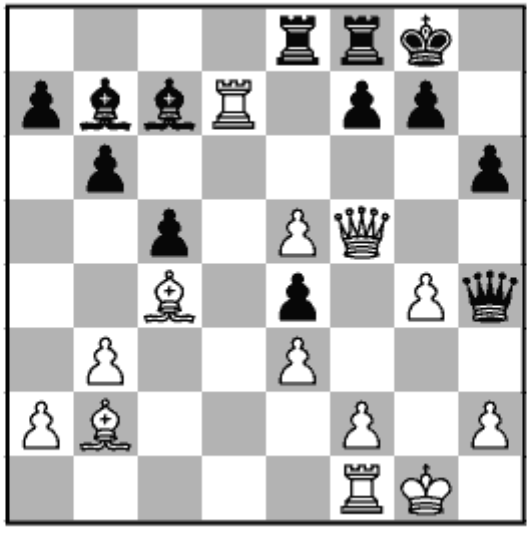
Solution 197: White to play

Blomqvist – Gajewski

Stockholm 2018/19

After **18 Bf5!** (in the game 18 Nxe5? Re8 gave Black a large advantage) **18…Ng5** (or 18…Nf6 19 Qxe5 Nfe8 20 Qxc5 +–, while 18…Nc3 19 Qxe5 Nxd1 20 Rxd1 Nxc4 21 Rxd8 Nxe5 22 Rxf8+ also gives White a decisive plus) **19 Nxg5 Qxg5 20 Bxh7+ Kxh7 21 Rxd6 +/–** White will end up a pawn ahead with good chances of victory. **21…Rac8** is well met by **22 Qe4+**.

back



Solution 198: Black to play

Debashis – Urkedal

Stockholm 2018/19

21…Bc8!

Not 21…Re7? 22 Rxe7 Qxe7 23 e6 +–.

22 Bxf7+

22 Rfd1 changes nothing: 22…Bxe5 23 Bxe5 Bxd7 and White resigned here in view of 24 Rxd7 Rxe5 –+.

22…Kh8 23 Rfd1 Bxd7

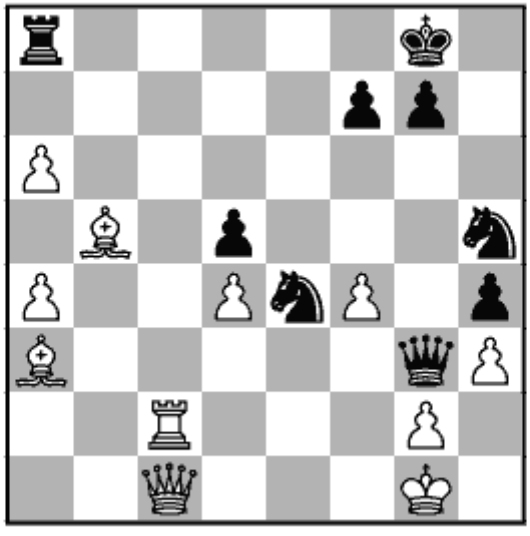
23…Bxe5 has the same idea, even though the move-order looks a little strange: 24 Bxe5 Rxe5 25 Qxe5 Bxd7 –+. Not 23…Re7? 24 Bg6!, with unclear play as Black must avoid 24…Rxf5?? 25 Rd8+ +–.

24 Rxd7 Bxe5!

Without this move, White would be fine. But now he loses.

25 Bxe5 Rxe5 26 Qxe5 Qxg4+ –+

back



Solution 199: White to play

Zhang Xiao – Nie Xinyang

Tianjin 2018/19

White must first secure his king, and only then think about pushing his a6-pawn.

35 Bb4!

After 35 Bc6? Nxf4 36 Bxa8 Nxh3+ the game ends with perpetual check: 37 Kf1 Qd3+ 38 Ke1 Qg3+ = or 37 Kh1 Nef2+ 38 Rxf2 Nxf2+ (the game was agreed drawn here) 39 Kg1 Nh3+ = (or 39…h3 40 Qc8+ Kh7 41 Qf5+ =).

35…Nxf4 36 Be1 Nxh3+

36…Qg5 37 Qe3 +–.

37 Kf1

Black's attack is over, and next move White will take the knight. Not 37 Kh1? Nef2+ –+.

37…Qh2 38 gxh3 Qxh3+

38…Qh1+ 39 Ke2 +–.

39 Kg1 +–

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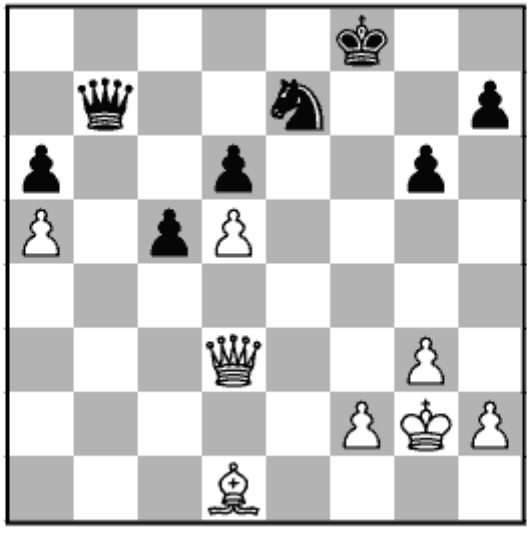

Solution 200: White to play

Lu Miaoyi – Li Haoyu (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

45 Be2!

45 Bf3? Nf5 is unclear, while after 45 Qf3+?! Kg7 46 Qc3+ Kf7 White has a large advantage, but Black retains chances to hold the position.

45…Qxd5+

Or 45…Nxd5 46 Bf3 Nb4 47 Bxb7 Nxd3 48 Bxa6 +–. After 45…Nf5 46 Qxa6 Qxd5+ 47 Bf3 Qa2 48 h4 +– Black's threats are over, as he gains nothing from 48…Ne3+ 49 Kg1 Qa1+ 50 Kh2.

46 Qxd5 Nxd5 47 Bxa6

Material is equal, but White has a decisive advantage because of his passed a-pawn. For example: **47…Nc7 48 Bb7 Ke7 49 a6 Nb5 50 Bc6 Na7 51 Bd5 +–**.

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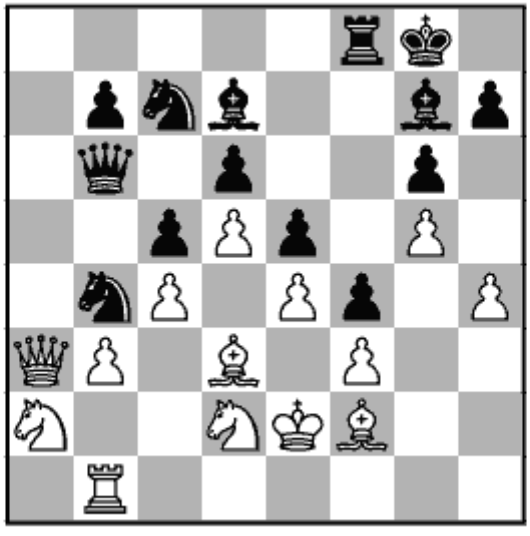


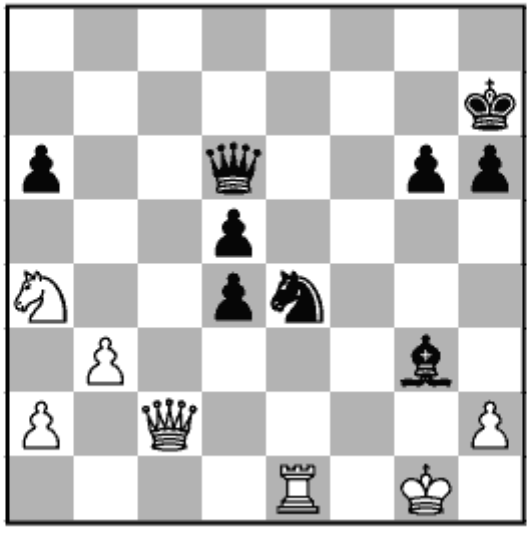
Solution 201: White to play

Lyrberg – Murzin

Stockholm 2018/19

24 Qxb4! (24 Nxb4? is wrong because before recapturing, Black can drive the white queen away with 24…Ra8! 25 Qb2 Qxb4 =+) **24…Qxb4 25 Nxb4 cxb4 26 c5** (as played in the game) gives Black a hopeless position because the g7-bishop is out of the game. For example: **26…dxc5 27 Bxc5 Ra8 28 Bxb4 +–**.

back



Solution 202: White to play

Pranav – A.Liang

Stockholm 2018/19

The first step is to reduce Black's attacking potential, and the knight is the obvious target.

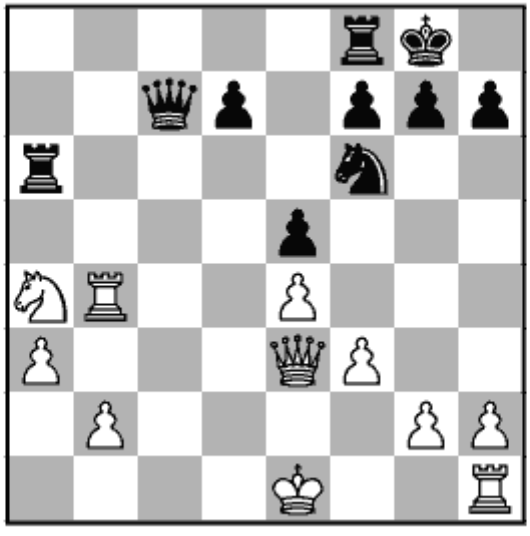
34 Rxe4!

34 hxg3? loses to 34…Qxg3+ 35 Kf1 d3! 36 Qg2 d2 (as played in the game) 37 Rd1 Qe3 –+ and White has no good defence against the knight check on g3.

34…dxe4 35 hxg3

Now the position is close to a draw. For example: **35…Qxg3+** (35…d3 36 Qf2 d2 37 Nc3 =) **36 Kf1** (36 Qg2 Qe5 37 b4! = also secures a draw) **36…Qf3+** (36…d3 37 Qf2 =; 36…e3 37 Nc5 =) **37 Qf2 Qh1+ 38 Ke2 Qh5+ 39 Kf1 =** and the game will end with perpetual check.

back



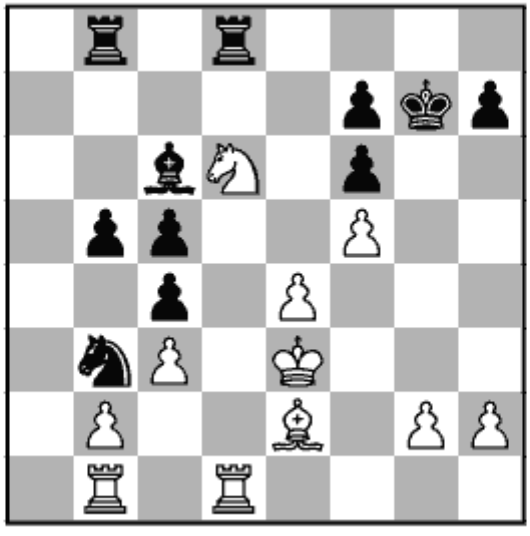
Solution 203: Black to play

Ruiz Castillo – Taghizadeh

Burlingame 2019

After **20…Rxa4! 21 Rxa4 Qc2** (as played in the game) Black will win one of White's rooks, and the game: **22 Rb4** (22 0-0 Qxa4 –+) **22…Qb1+ 23 Kf2 Qxh1 –+**.

back



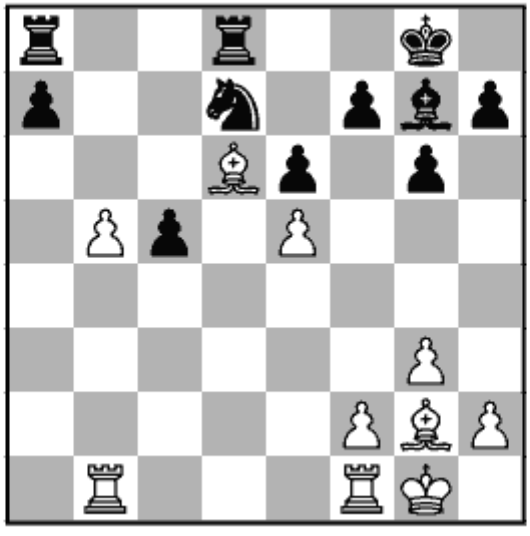
Solution 204: Black to play

P.Almagro – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

25…Rd7! (next move Black will attack the d6-knight, which has nowhere to go) **26 Bf3 Rbd8 27 e5 Bxf3 28 Kxf3** (the game ended 28 Ne8+? Rxe8 29 Rxd7 Bc6 0-1) **28…fxe5 29 Ne8+ Kf8 –/+** with an extra pawn and good chances to win.

back



Solution 205: Black to play

Javakhadze – Eswaran

Burlingame 2019

Black can clearly get the white e5-pawn for the exchange, but must also hold on to the c5-pawn.

23…Rac8!

After 23…Nxe5? 24 Bxc5! Rac8 (24…Bf8!?) 25 Bxa7 +– (as played in the game) White's b-pawn is too strong.

24 Bb7

Or 24 f4!? Bf8 25 Bb7 Bxd6 26 Bxc8 Bxe5!, with unclear play.

24…Nxe5 25 Bxc8

25 Bxe5 Bxe5 26 Bxc8 Rxc8 =.

25…Rxd6

with a playable game, and near-equality.

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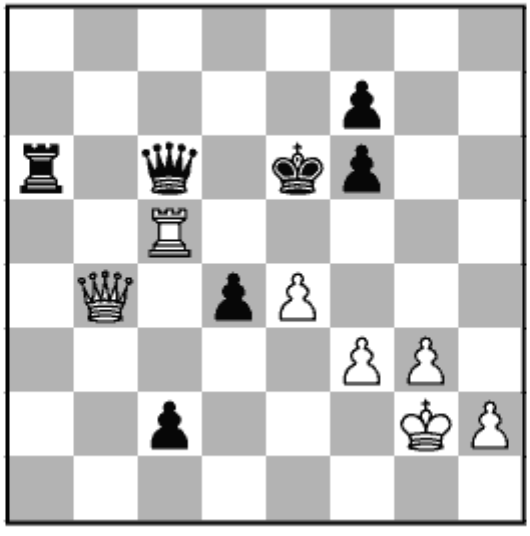

Solution 206: White to play

Training position

Rather than taking the black queen, the priority is to neutralize the dangerous pawn on c2.

1 Qb3+!

After 1 Qc4+? Kd6! (1…Kd7? 2 Qxc2 +–) 2 Qxd4+ Kc7 Black achieves a draw thanks to his strong passed pawn: 3 Qc3 Qxc5! 4 Qxc5+ Rc6 =.

1…Kd6 2 Rxc2 +–

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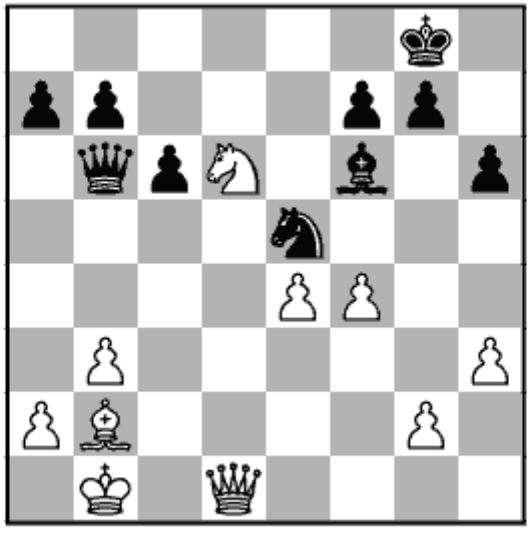

Solution 207: Black to play

Røyset – J.Trevelyan

Hastings 2018/19

37…Ng6!

The more natural 37…Nd7? is a mistake due to 38 e5 Be7 (38…Bd8 39 Nxf7 +–) 39 Nf5 +–, as played in the game.

38 e5

38 Bxf6 gxf6 is unclear.

38…Be7

Other squares for the bishop are less fortunate: 38…Bd8? 39 f5 Nf4 40 Nc4! Qc7 41 Qg4 +– or 38…Bh4?! 39 f5 Nf4 40 a3! with an attack; e.g., 40…Qf2 (40…Nd5 41 f6 +/–) 41 Nxf7.

39 f5 Nf4!

39…Nf8?! 40 Nc8 Qc7 41 Nxe7+ +/– gives White a large advantage.

40 Nc8

40 Nc4?! Qf2 –/+.

40…Qc7

with an unclear position. Next the knight will go to d5.

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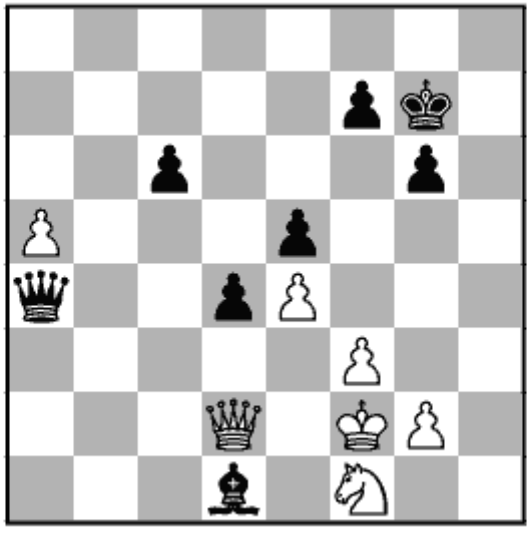


Solution 208: White to play

A.Barton – M.Chapman

Hastings 2018/19

46 Nh2!

On g4 the knight will create serious problems for Black. 46 Ng3? (as played in the game) should have been answered with 46…f6!, denying the white queen the g5-square, and so leaving the knight uselessly placed on g3.

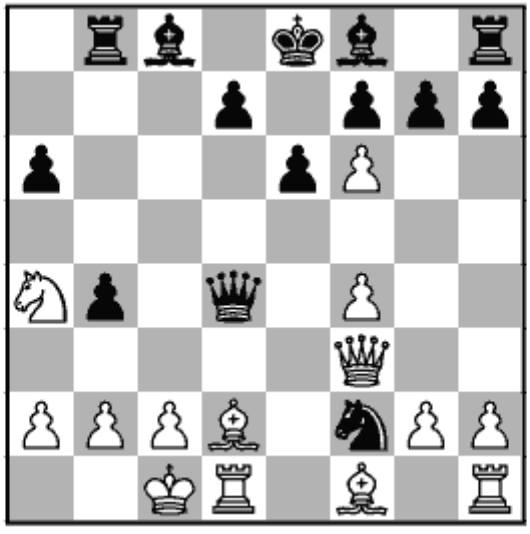
46…f6 47 Ng4 Kf7

47…g5?! 48 Qe1! Bb3 49 Qh1 +–.

48 a6!

with a large advantage. While Black is dealing with the a-pawn, White will bring his queen into the attack on the other flank. For example: **48…Ke6** (48…g5?! 49 a7 Bb3 50 Qb2 +–) **49 Kg3 c5 50 Qh6 Qxa6 51 Qxg6** +/–.

back



Solution 209: White to play

C.Murphy – Leenhouts

Hastings 2018/19

16 Bc3!

Only this move is good enough; otherwise White loses. 16 c3? bxc3 17 Bxc3 Qxd1+ –+.

16…Qxd1+ 17 Qxd1 Nxd1 18 fxg7

18 Be5? Nf2 –+.

18…Bxg7

18…Rg8? 19 gxf8Q+ Kxf8 20 Bd4 +–.

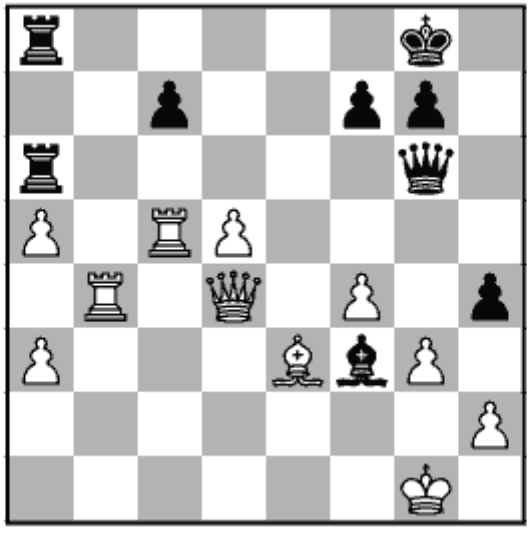
19 Bxg7 Nf2!

19…Rg8? 20 Bd4! (20 Be5? Nf2) 20…Bb7 21 Rg1 +–.

20 Bxh8 Nxh1 21 Be5 +=

White has a slight advantage thanks to the bad knight on h1.

back



Solution 210: White to play

Kalavannan – A.Taylor

Hastings 2018/19

34 f5!

In the game 34 Kf2? hxg3+ 35 hxg3 Qh5 –/+ gave Black a dangerous attack.

34…Qxf5 35 Qf4

An exchange of queens will kill Black's attack, leaving the a5-pawn as a decisive advantage.

35…Rf6 36 Qxf5 Rxf5 37 Rf4 Rxf4 38 Bxf4 +–

back

Solution 211: Black to play

Zelesco – Kravtsiv (variation)

Al Ain tt 2012

20…f4!

Not 20…Nxd4? 21 Bxd4 Bxd4 22 Nge2 +=.

21 Bxf4 Rf8 22 Nce2 g5

Black wins the bishop and the game. **23 d5** doesn't help in view of **23…Nxf4 24 dxc6 Nxh3+ 25 gxh3 Qxd1+ –+**.

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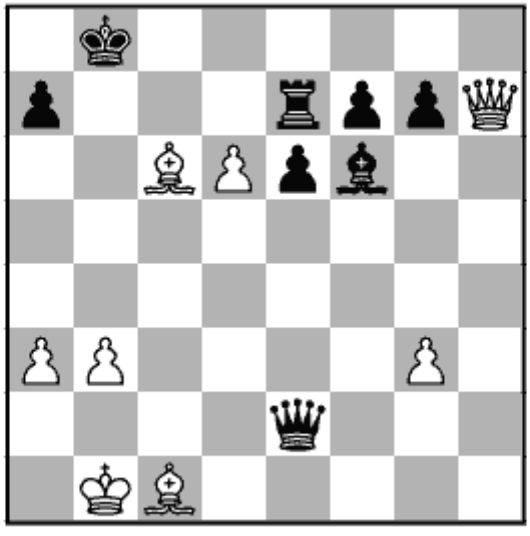

Solution 212: Black to play

Kravtsiv – Abergel (variation)

Cappelle-la-Grande 2013

33…Re8! 34 Bxe8

Or 34 d7 Rd8 35 Qc2 Qxc2+ 36 Kxc2 Kc7 –+.

34…g6!

With his queen cut off, White cannot parry the mating threats:
35 Qh1 Qd3+ 36 Ka2 Qc2+ 37 Bb2 Qxb2#.

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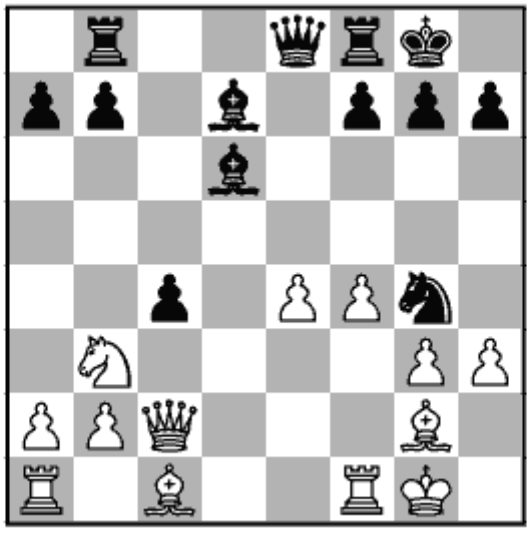


Solution 213: White to play

Navalgund – Lugovskoi

Mumbai 2018/19

18 Nd4!

This gives White the advantage. Taking the knight or the pawn is not the best solution: 18 hxg4?! cxb3 19 Qxb3 Bxg4 = (played in the game); 18 Qxc4?! Bb5 19 Qd4 Bxf1 20 Bxf1 Rd8! 21 hxg4 Bxf4 is unclear.

18…Bc5

18…Nh6 19 Qxc4 +/–.

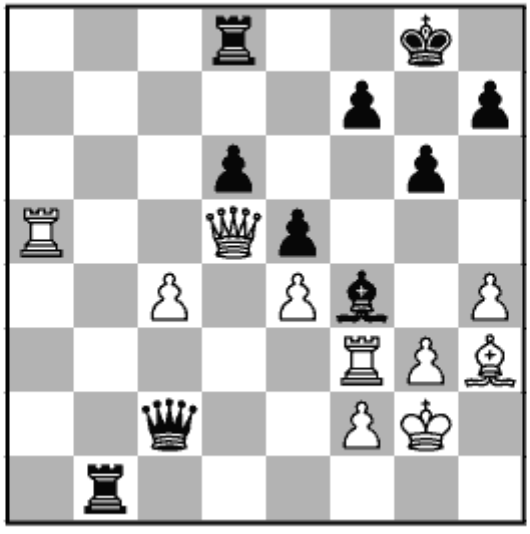
19 Qxc4

Or 19 Rd1!? Nh6 20 Qxc4 +/–.

19…Bb6 20 Kh1!

White has an extra pawn and a big advantage. He is right to avoid the unclear 20 hxg4? Bb5.

back



Solution 214: White to play

Kravtsiv – Venkatesh

Chennai 2012

White's priority should be to safeguard his king.

30 Kh2!

Not 30 gxf4? Qc1 31 Kg3 Qh1 –+. 30 Ra7? is bad too because of 30…Rf8 31 Kh2 Rd1, when with the rook on f8, there will be no check after taking on f7: 32 Qc6 (after 32 Qb7 Rd2 White can't play 33 Kg2? because of 33…Be3 –+) 32…Rd2 33 Qb6 (33 gxf4? Rxf2+ –+) 33…Qxe4, with unclear play.

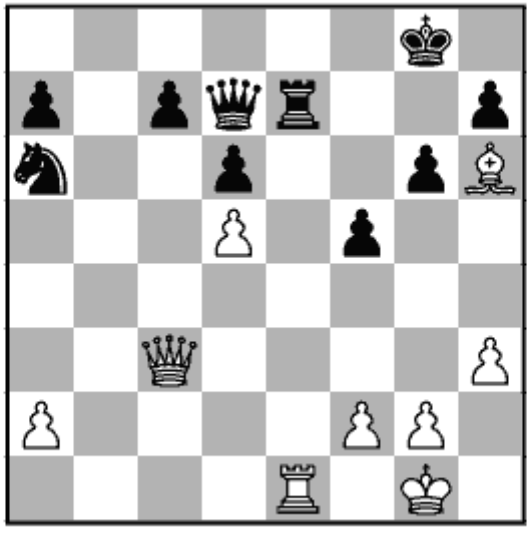
30…Rd1 31 Qb7

31 Qc6!? Be3 32 Qc7 Rf8 33 Ra8 +– was played in the game.

31…Rd2 32 Kg2 +–

with an extra bishop and a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 215: White to play

Kucuksari – Rahul Kumar

Stockholm 2018/19

The fewer pieces are on the board, the easier it is to defend. As White is attacking, it is important for him to keep the rooks on the board.

29 Rb1!

Not 29 Rxe7? Qxe7 30 Qc6, when 30…Nc5! (rather than 30…Nb4? 31 Qc4 Qe1+ 32 Kh2 +–, as played in the game) is roughly equal.

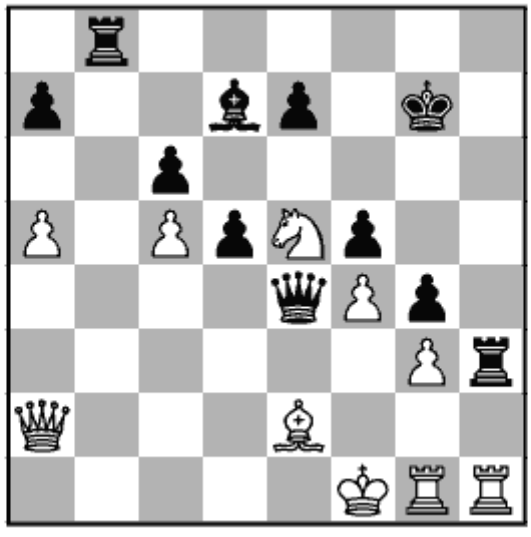
29…Re8

Or: 29…Qe8 30 Rb7 Nc5 31 Rxa7 +–; 29…Qc8 30 Rb7! Qxb7 31 Qf6 +–.

30 Rb7 Nc5 31 Rxa7

and Black's position is close to hopeless.

back



Solution 216: White to play

Ganaus – Rakesh

Stockholm 2018/19

Clearly White must deal with the possible check on b1, but care is needed in determining how exactly to do so.

34 Rxh3!

After 34 Bd3? Qxh1! (as played in the game) White must think in terms of saving his skin: 35 Bc2!? (35 Rxh1? Rxh1+ 36 Kg2 Rbh8 –+) 35…Qh2 36 Rg2 Qh1+ = with a repetition of moves.

34…Rb1+

34…gxh3 is met by 35 Bd3 Qd4 36 Qf2 +–.

35 Qxb1!

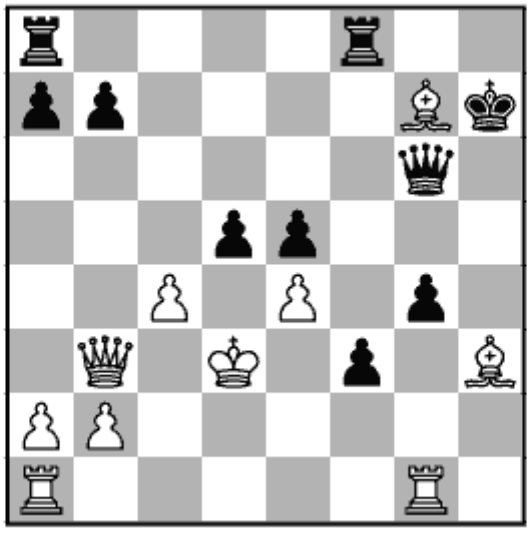
Not 35 Kf2?? Qd4+ –+.

35…Qxb1+ 36 Kf2

White has too many pieces for the queen.

36…Qe4 37 Rh2 Qd4+ 38 Kf1 +–

back



Solution 217: Black to play

Thrish – Srijit

Mumbai 2018/19

He needs to open lines for his rooks.

26…dxc4+!

After 26…Qxe4+? 27 Kc3 the king flees to b4 and the position becomes messy: 27…Qd4+ (27…d4+? 28 Kb4 +– was played in the game; 27…f2 28 Bxf8 Qe3+ 29 Kc2 Qe2+ 30 Kc3 Qe3+ =) 28 Kb4! (28 Kc2? dxc4 –+) 28…Rf4 29 Rxg4 with unclear play.

27 Qxc4

27 Kxc4 Qxe4+ –+.

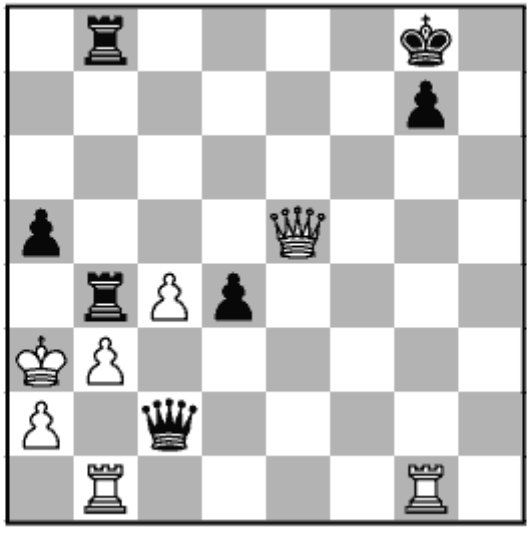
27…Rfd8+ 28 Kc3

28 Ke3 Qb6+ 29 Qc5 Qxc5#.

28…Rac8 –+

with an easy win.

back

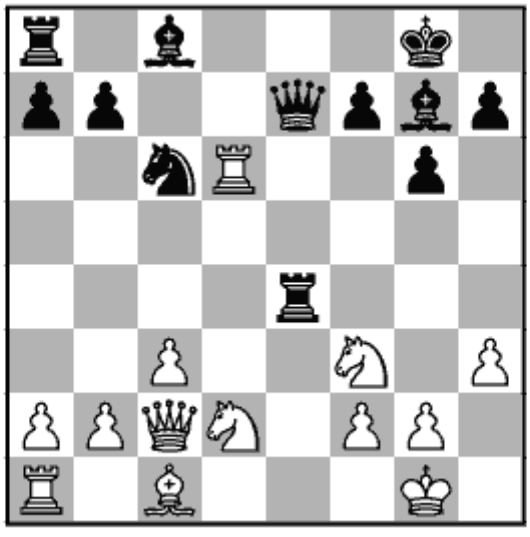


Solution 218: Black to play

Training position

The king can't be defended, but Black can save himself with a counterattack: **1…Ra4+!** (1…R4b7? loses to 2 Qe6+ or 2 Rxg7+ Rxg7 3 Qxb8+) **2 bxa4 Qc3+ 3 Rb3 Rxb3+ 4 axb3 Qb4+** and the game will end in perpetual check: **5 Kb2 Qd2+** (5…Qc3+ 6 Ka3 Qb4+ 7 Ka2 Qd2+ 8 Kb1 transposes) **6 Kb1 Qd3+ 7 Kc1 Qc3+ 8 Kd1 Qa1+ 9 Kd2** (9 Ke2? d3+ –+) **9… Qc3+ 10 Kd1** =.

back



Solution 219: Black to play

Sangma – A.Gandhi

Mumbai 2018/19

The key is the role that both sides' active (but exposed) rooks shall play.

15…Rf4!

After 15…Re2?! 16 Qd1! White will finish his development and Black will be left with a fight for a draw following 16… Bf5 17 Nc4 +/–, as played in the game, or 16…Qxd6 17 Qxe2 +=.

16 Rd5 Be6 17 Rg5

No better is 17 Rb5 a6 (17…Rd8!? –/+) 18 Rg5.

17…Bf5

Black has a great position because of the clumsy white rook on g5. There may follow **18 Qd1** (18 Qb3 Re8 19 Nf1?! Rxf3! 20 gxf3 Qe1 –+) **18…Qd7 –/+** (or 18…Rd8!?).

back

Solution 220: White to play

Vigneshwaran – Kravtsiv (variation)

Chennai 2012

White must deprive Black of the chance to play …Nd5.

34 Nc6!

34 Nb5? Nd5 35 Rxe7+ and after 35…Kf8! (rather than 35…Kxe7?! 36 Bxf6+ +/–) Black is no worse: 36 Qh6+ Kxe7 with unclear play. 34 Rxe7+? Kxe7 35 Qc7+ Ke8 is also unclear.

34…Rxc7

34…Nd5?! loses immediately: 35 Rxe7+ Nxe7 (35…Kg8 36 Qd6 +–) 36 Qxf6+ +–.

35 Qxf6+

35 Qxc7+? Ke6 is unclear.

35…Ke8

35…Kg8 36 Nd8 +–.

36 Qh8+

White makes no progress by 36 Qe6+ Kf8 37 Qd6+ Ke8, but can still return to the right path with 38 Qe6+ Kf8 39 Qf6+. The fact that White can safely repeat here constitutes a 'safety-net' that could encourage White to play a move like 34 Nc6! even if he had not managed to see all the way through to the critical blow 37 Nb8+! (see below). It would be legitimate to calculate to this point and think "there's probably a win, which I'll work out once the position is on the board". In the unlikely event of the win not being there, it is still possible to bail out with a draw.

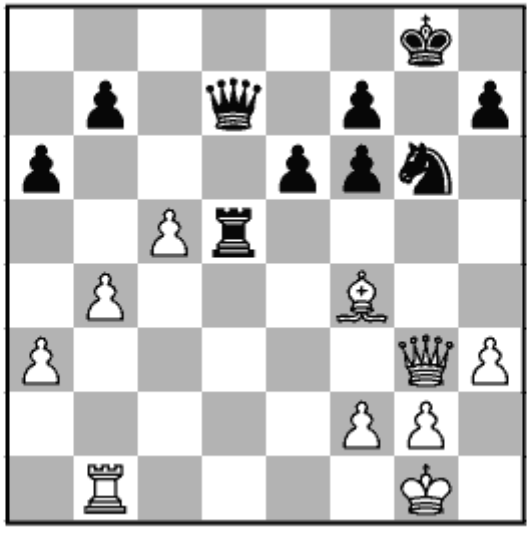
36…Kd7

36…Kf7 37 Qxh7+ Kf8 38 Qh8+ Kf7 39 Qg7+ Ke8 40 Qg8+ +–.

37 Nb8+!

After this surprising knight leap, Black loses his queen or rook: **37…Ke7 38 Qe5+** +–.

back



Solution 221: White to play

Triton – Laoussing

Mumbai 2018/19

29 Bh6!

White failed to play this in the game. However, it leaves Black in a hopeless position due to his vulnerable king. If you found this move and felt White was winning, then you have solved the exercise. But let's look at some sample lines:

29…Qd8

29…Rd1+ 30 Kh2! +–.

30 b5!?

The most aggressive, though there are other good options, such as 30 Rb3 +/– and 30 Kh2 +/–.

30…Rxc5

30…axb5 31 Rxb5 +–.

31 bxa6 bxa6 32 a4!?

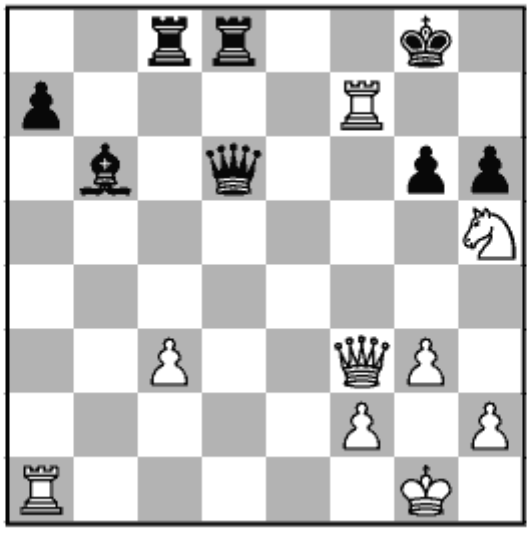
Denying Black the opportunity to put his rook on b5. Now Black is tied to the defence of his back rank. 32 Rb8 Rc8 33 Rxc8 Qxc8 34 h4 +/–.

32…Rc8

32…Rc4 33 h4 Rc5 34 h5 +–.

33 h4 Qd5 34 Rb8 Qc5 35 Rxc8+ Qxc8 36 h5 +–

back



Solution 222: Black to play

D.Boros – Quesada Perez

Burlingame 2019

Yes, he can:

31…gxh5

In the game Black preferred 31…Rf8, which is also viable.

32 Qf5 Bxf2+!

Black returns the piece and secures a draw. But not 32…Qd3? 33 Rf8+ +–.

33 Qxf2

Or: 33 Kxf2 Qc5+ 34 Qxc5 Rxc5 =; 33 Kf1 Qd3+ =; 33 Kg2 Qd5+ =.

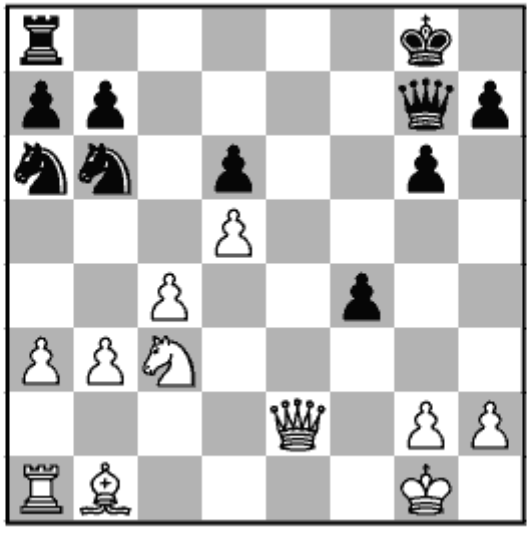
33…Qc5

In view of his exposed king, it is safest for Black to exchange queens, though several other moves are playable too.

34 Qxc5 Rxc5 35 Raxa7 Rxc3

with a drawn position.

back



Solution 223: White to play

M.Anderson – A.Lee

Burlingame 2019

White mustn't allow Black to bring his rook to e8.

23 Qe1!

After 23 Qd2? Re8 the rook will move to e3, when White's game will be grim: 24 Ba2 Re3 25 Rc1 Nc5 –+ (this was played in the game). In the case of 23 Qe6+? Kh8 24 Qe1 Nxd5! 25 cxd5 Rc8 –/+ it is clear that the check on e6 merely helped Black.

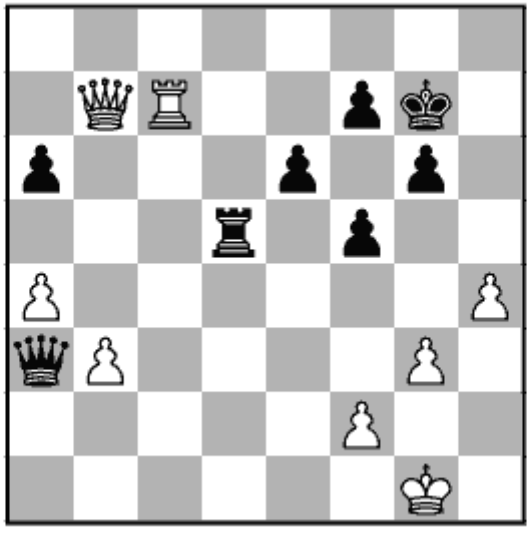
23…Nc5

23…Rf8 24 Bc2 f3 25 gxf3 (25 Qe3!?) 25…Rxf3 26 Qe6+ Kh8 27 Qe8+ Rf8 28 Qe3 is unclear.

24 Bc2 Rf8 25 Qd2 f3 26 Rf1

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 224: Black to play

Hevia – A.Grabinsky

Burlingame 2019

He needs to activate his queen.

37…Qa1+!

Not 37…Qf8? 38 Qxa6 +–.

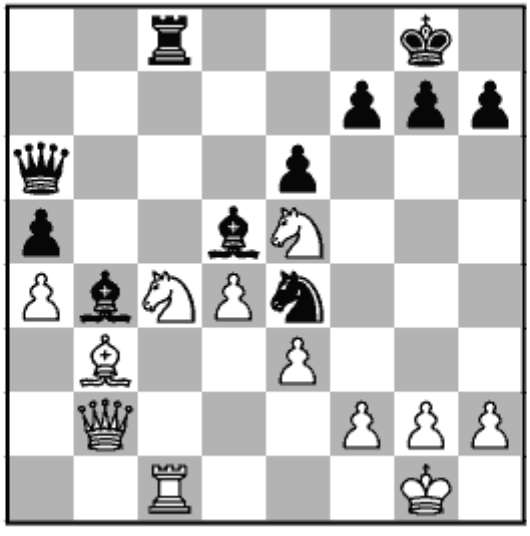
38 Kg2 Qf6 39 Qxa6

39 Rc4 a5 = was played in the game.

39…f4!

By weakening the white king's defences, Black secures good compensation for the pawn. The position is more or less equal after **40 Qe2 fxg3 41 fxg3 Qd8 42 Rc2 Qd6**.

back



Solution 225: White to play

R.Wu – J.Colas

Burlingame 2019

27 f3!

In the game, White did not notice Black's threat and quickly lost: 27 Rc2? f6! –+ 28 Nb6 Rxc2 29 Qxc2 Bxb3 and White resigned a couple of moves later.

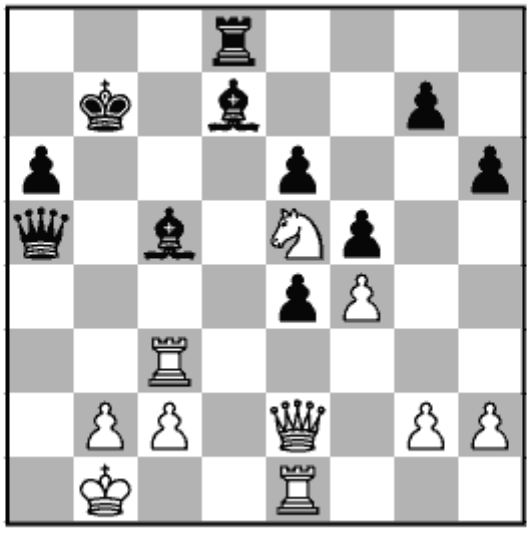
27…Nd6!

27…Nf6 28 Rc2 +/–.

28 Nxd6 Rxc1+ 29 Qxc1 Bxb3 30 Ndxf7 Qe2

with an unclear position and chances for both sides. For example, the game may end in a repetition of moves after **31 Ng5 Ba3 32 Qc8+ Bf8 33 Qc1 Ba3 =**.

back



Solution 226: Black to play

Raghunandan – Harshavardhan

Mumbai 2018/19

31…Bb4 32 Rb3

32 Nf7!? may be a slightly better try, but still objectively losing after 32…Rb8 33 Rb3 Bb5 –+.

32…Bb5!

It is important to provoke c4 before putting the bishop on a4. 32…Ba4? (as played in the game) 33 Rc1! Bxb3 34 cxb3 gives White good compensation for the pawn. After 34…Qb6 he can choose 35 Qh5!? or 35 Rc6 Qb5 36 Qc2, with unclear play in both cases.

33 c4

Or: 33 Nc4 Qa4 34 Rc1 Rc8 –+; 33 Rxb4 Qxb4 –+.

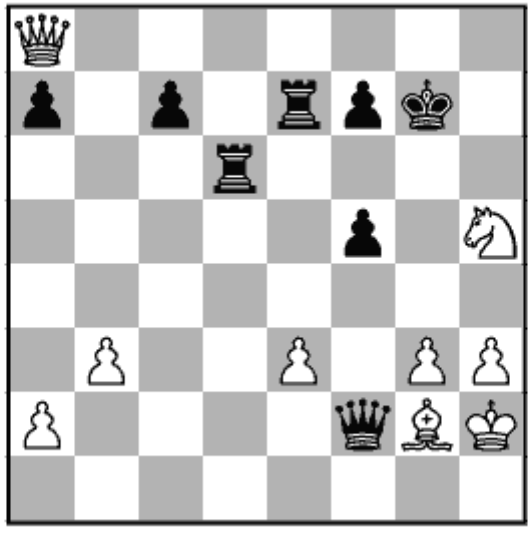
33…Ba4 34 Qe3 Ka8!?

Slightly weaker is 34…Bxb3 35 Qxb3 Qb6.

35 Rf1 Bd2 36 Qb6 Bxb3 37 Qxb3 Rd6

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 227: Black to play

Prohaszka – C.Yoo

Burlingame 2019

25…Kg6

25…Kh7? loses to 26 Qf8 +–.

26 Qh8

26 Qf8 is met most simply by 26…Kxh5, though there are several good options. 27 Qxe7 Kg6 –+.

26…Re4!

There's no need to be greedy and try to keep both rooks. After 26…f6? 27 Nf4+ Kf7 (as played in the game) 28 Nd5! Rxd5 29 Qh7+ the black king will hardly be able to escape the checks. 29…Ke6 30 Qg8+ is unclear.

27 Nf4+ Rxf4 28 exf4 Qe2

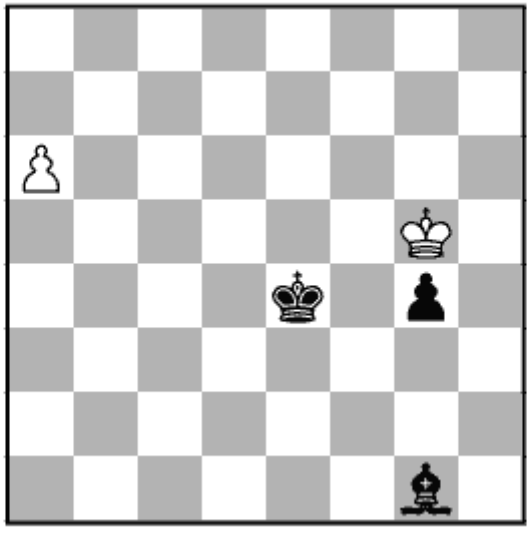
Not 28…Rd2? 29 Qg8+ Kf6 30 Qh8+ =, though 28…Qxa2!? –+ is also good.

29 Qg8+ Kf6 –+

back

5: Endgame Exercises

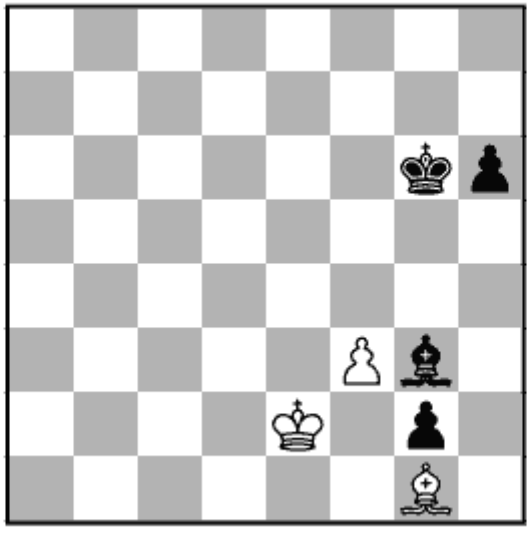
Here are 60 exercises to test your endgame skills and knowledge. The difficulty level starts at 1, but rises all the way to 4 by the end of the chapter (level 5 endgame puzzles are reserved for the next two chapters). Of course, if your endgames are a weak point, you might find some of these exercises a good deal harder! If so, this could be a hint that this is an area of your game that deserves some extra work. Note that in many cases, the exercises hinge on endgame tactics, as a whole chapter testing your knowledge of dry technical endings would not be very entertaining.



Puzzle 228: Black to play

Black must preserve his g-pawn. Should he push it or protect it with his king?

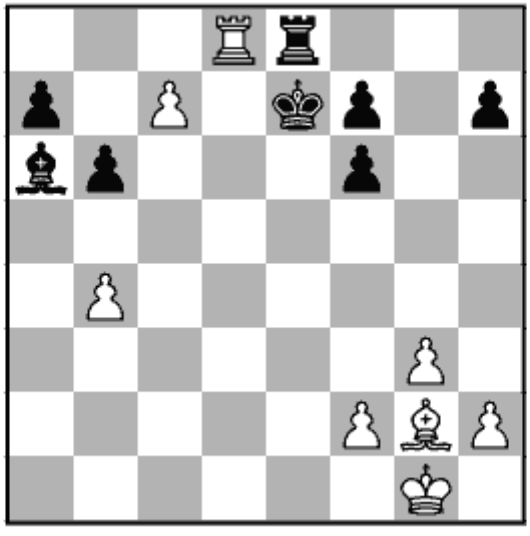
answer



Puzzle 229: White to play

There’s only one move that saves the game for White.

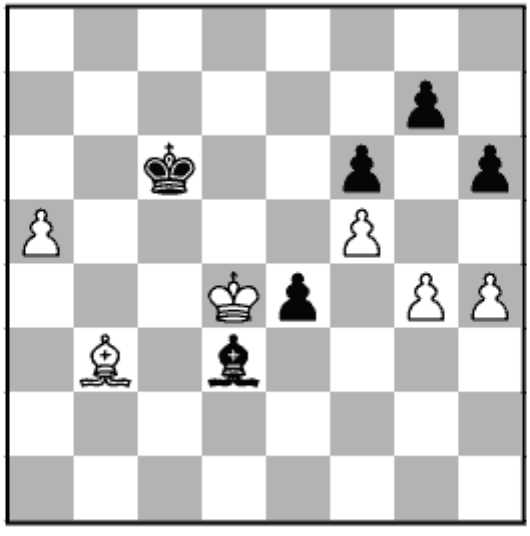
answer



Puzzle 230: White to play

Can White promote his c7-pawn?

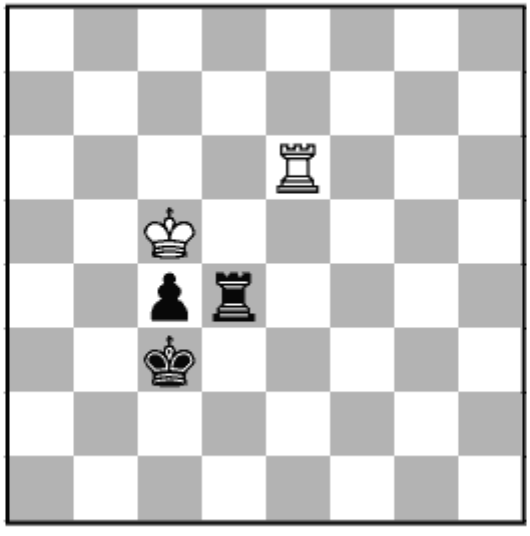
answer



Puzzle 231: White to play

White comfortably won the game. How?

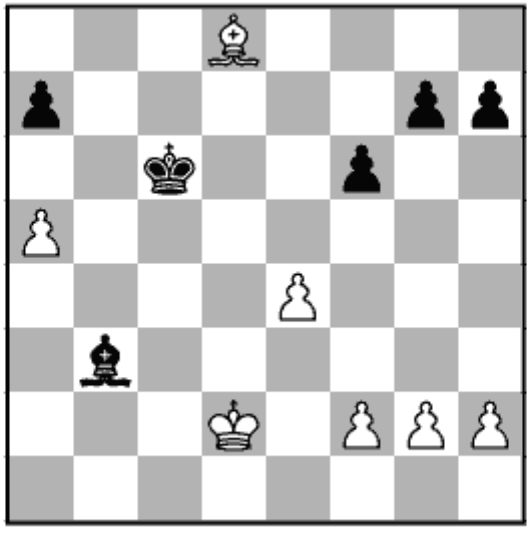
answer



Puzzle 232: White to play

How can White save the game?

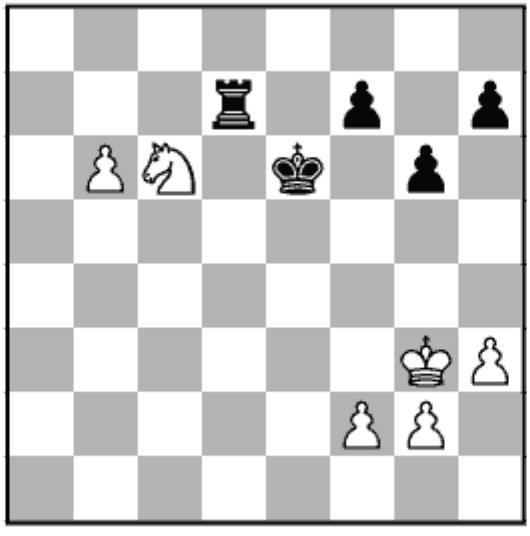
answer



Puzzle 233: Black to play

Opposite bishops can be drawish. But not here.

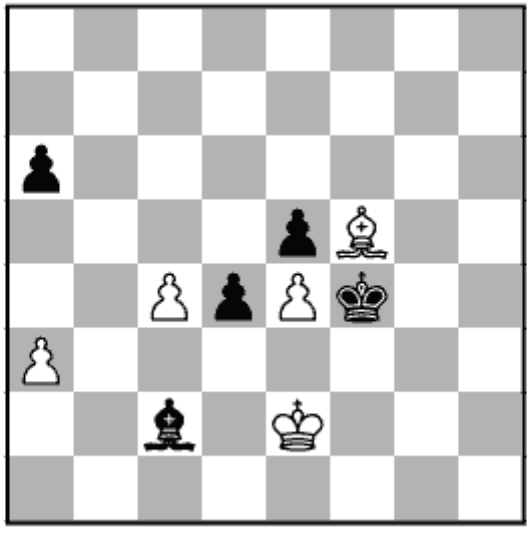
answer



Puzzle 234: White to play

How can White exploit the black king's position on e6?

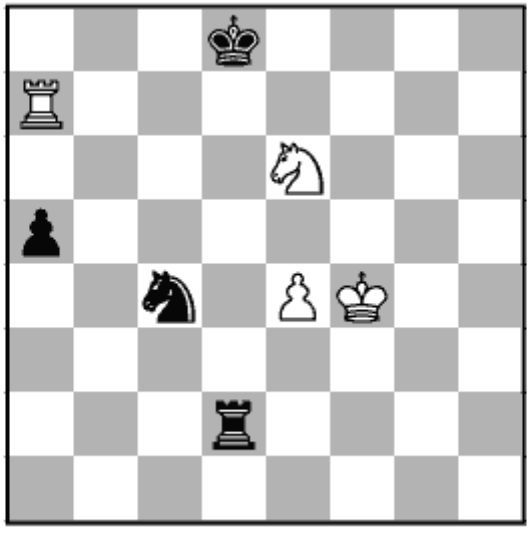
answer



Puzzle 235: White to play

Can White save his e4-pawn?

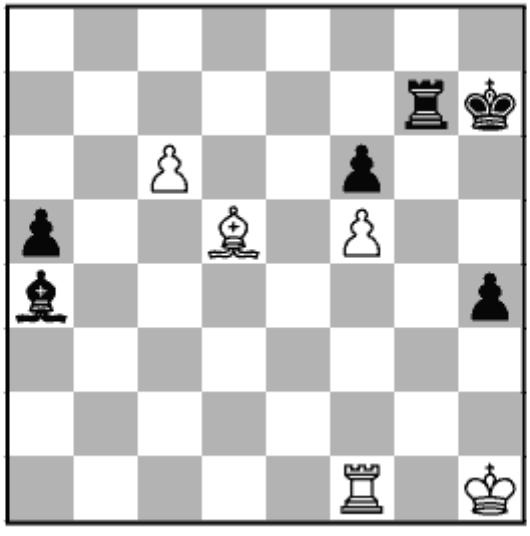
answer



Puzzle 236: Black to play

Where should the king go?

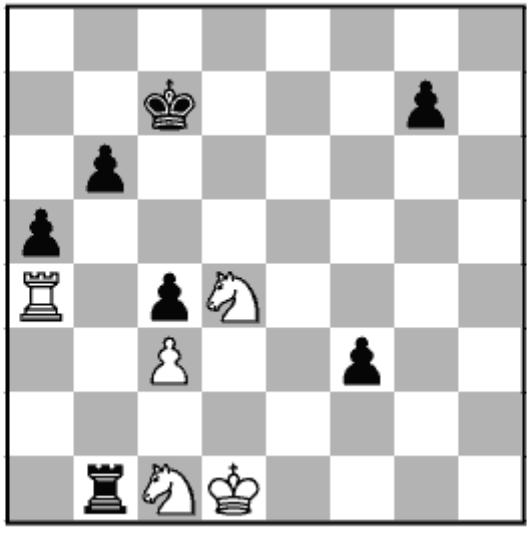
answer



Puzzle 237: White to play

Black’s pieces are unfortunately placed. How can this be exploited?

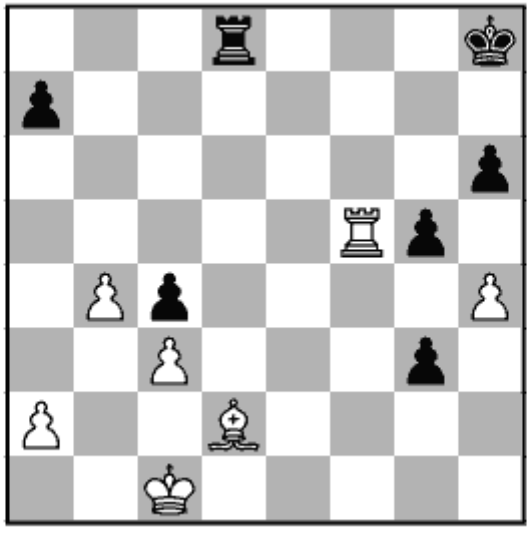
answer



Puzzle 238: Black to play

Winning a knight for the f-pawn isn't enough. Find the strongest continuation.

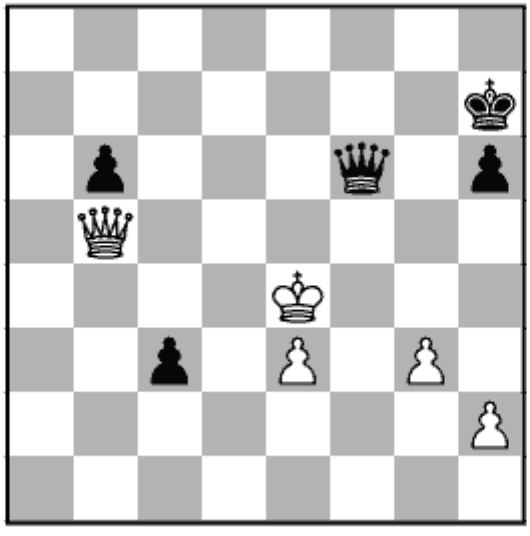
answer



Puzzle 239: Black to play

Black succeeded in queening. How?

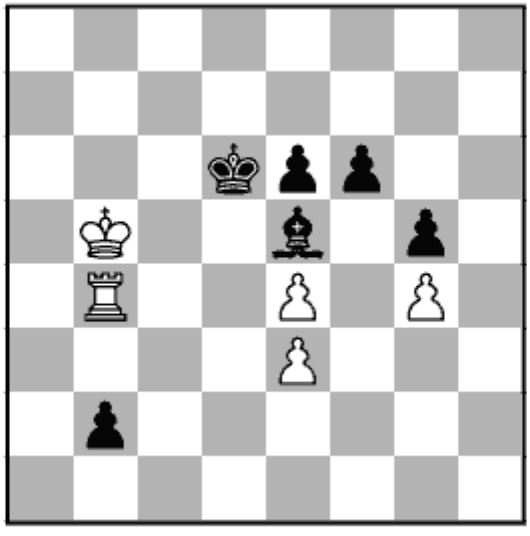
answer



Puzzle 240: White to play

How can White stop the c-pawn?

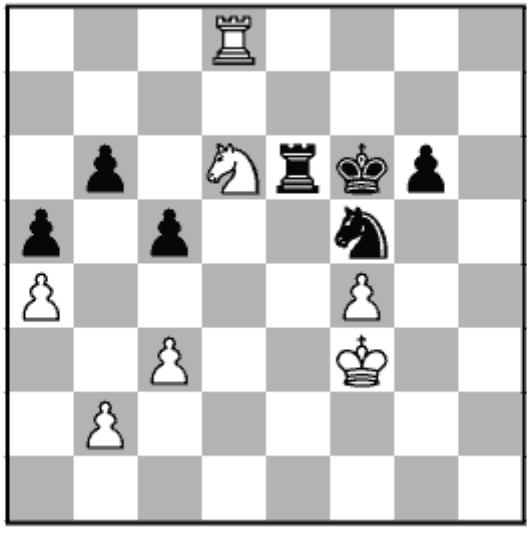
answer



Puzzle 241: Black to play

This game ended in a draw. What win did Black miss at this point?

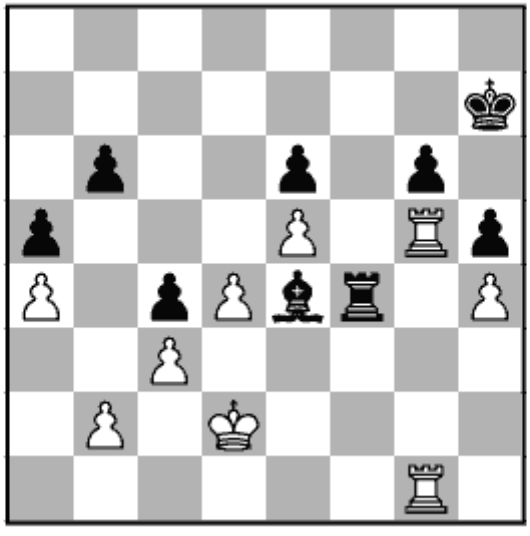
answer



Puzzle 242: White to play

A precise move gave White a huge advantage. What did he play?

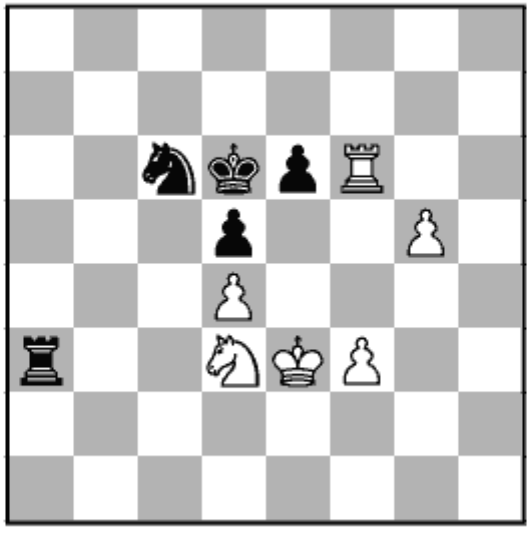
answer



Puzzle 243: White to play

White's h4-pawn looks set to fall. What should he do about that?

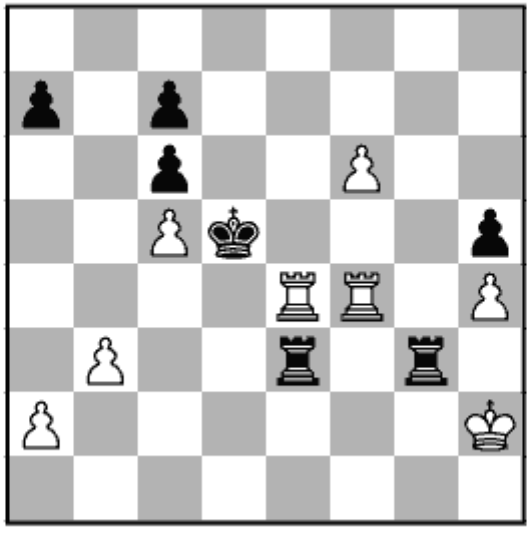
answer



Puzzle 244: Black to play

How can Black hold the draw?

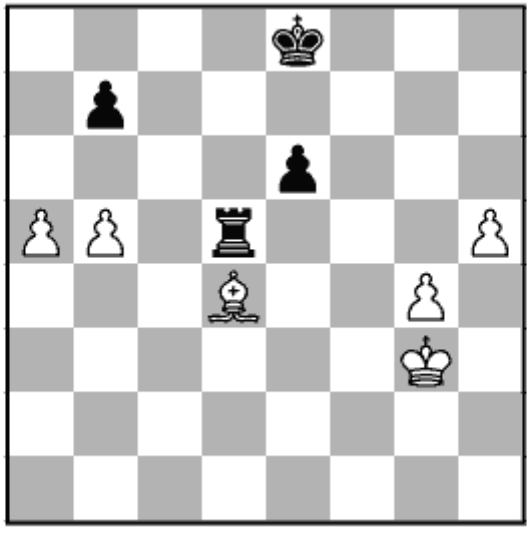
answer



Puzzle 245: Black to play

The f-pawn appears to be unstoppable. So what saving resources are left for Black?

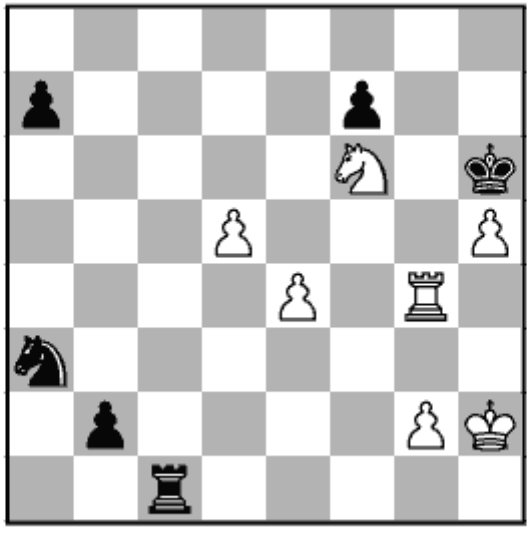
answer



Puzzle 246: White to play

Only one move leads to victory. Which one is it?

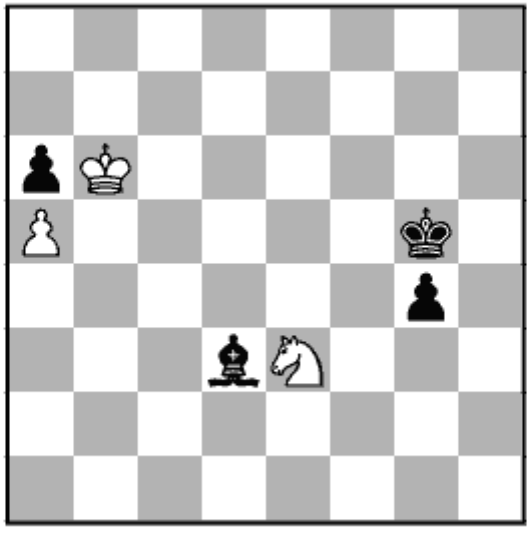
answer



Puzzle 247: White to play

Black is about to queen. Is there any escape for White?

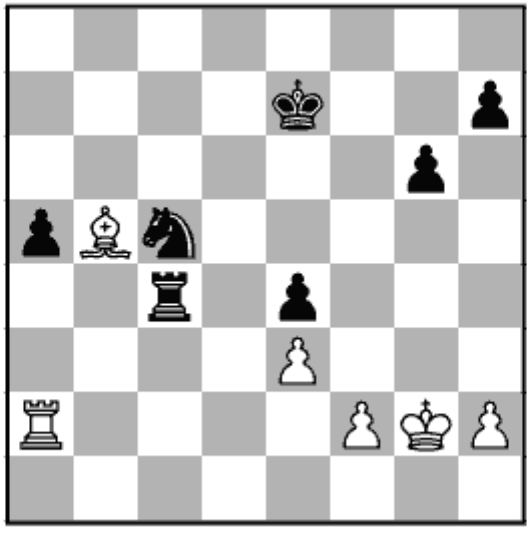
answer



Puzzle 248: White to play

How can White hold the draw?

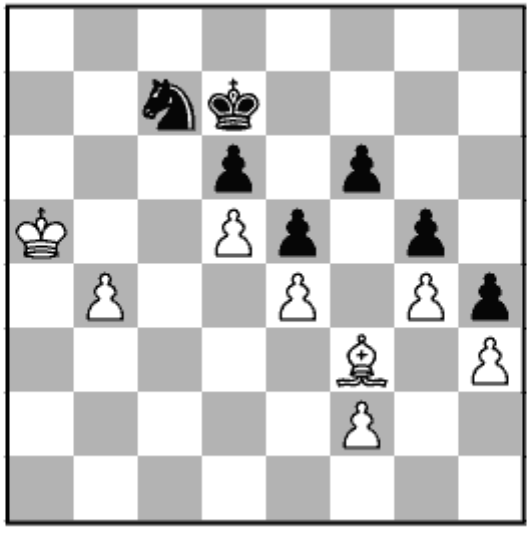
answer



Puzzle 249: Black to play

Where should the black rook go?

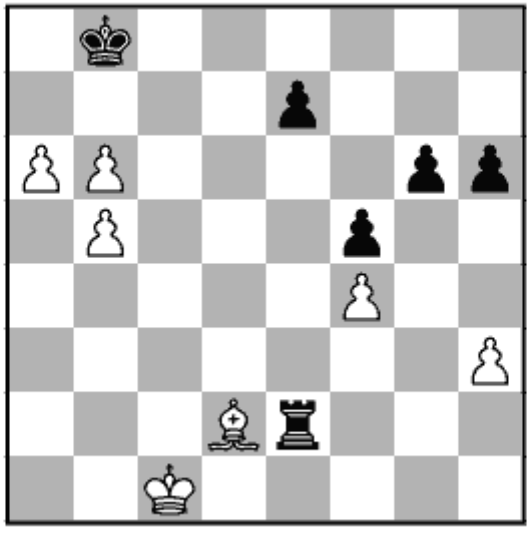
answer



Puzzle 250: Black to play

How can Black halt the advance of the b-pawn?

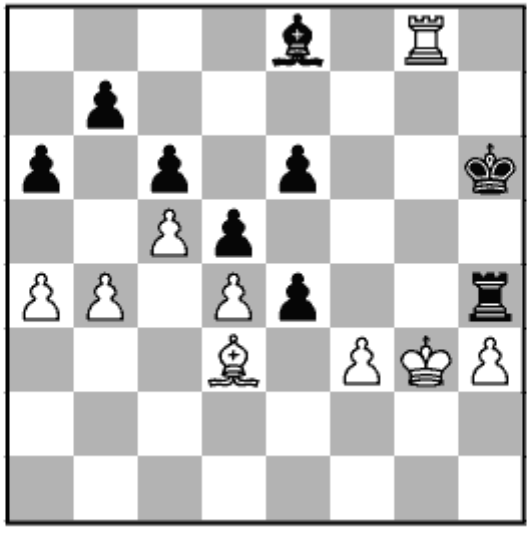
answer



Puzzle 251: Black to play

Despite White's menacing block of passed pawns, Black has a way to achieve a draw.

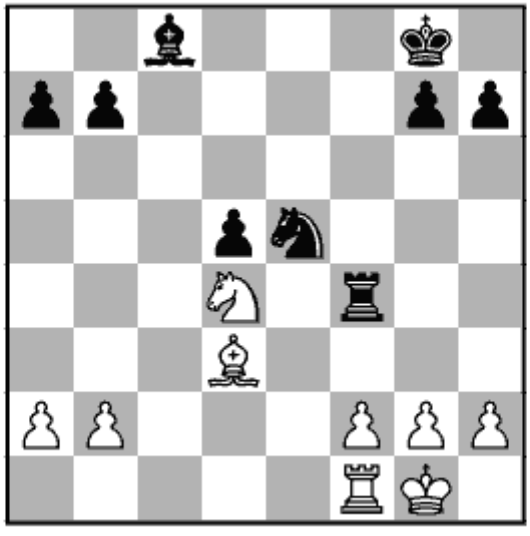
answer



Puzzle 252: Black to play

Several pieces are under attack. What should Black play?

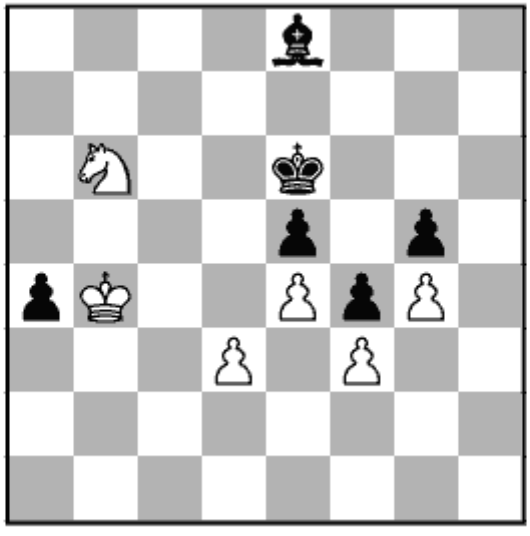
answer



Puzzle 253: White to play

Two of White's pieces are threatened. What should he do?

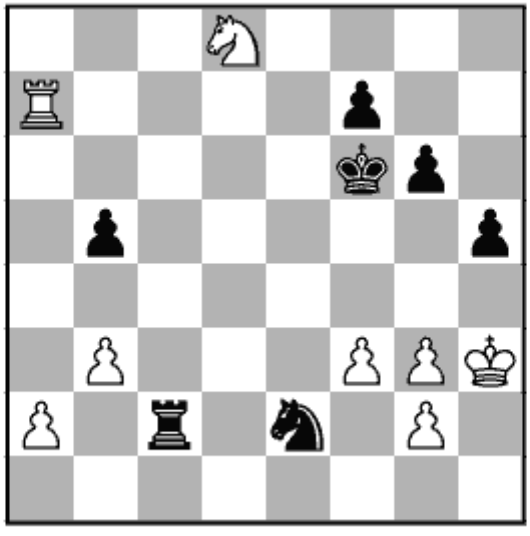
answer



Puzzle 254: Black to play

The a4-pawn can’t be protected. So how should Black continue?

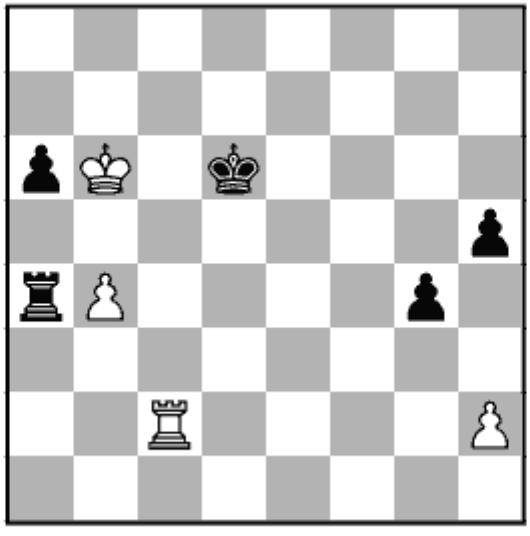
answer



Puzzle 255: Black to play

Black found a clear-cut win. What was it?

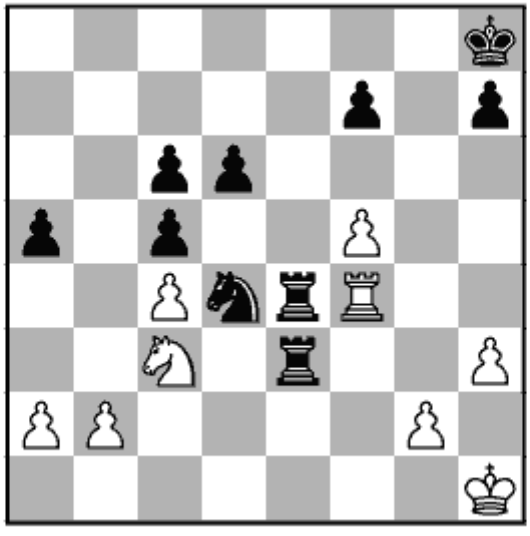
answer



Puzzle 256: White to play

How can White achieve a draw?

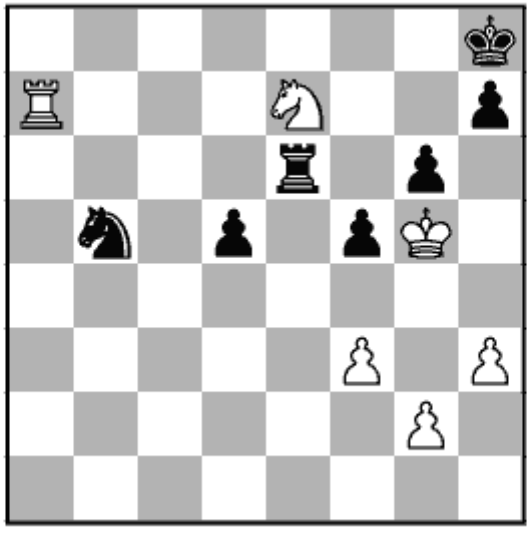
answer



Puzzle 257: White to play

How should White take on e4?

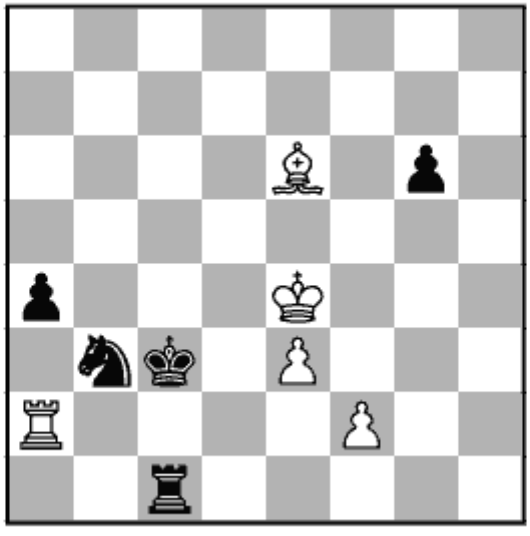
answer



Puzzle 258: White to play

Where should White put his rook?

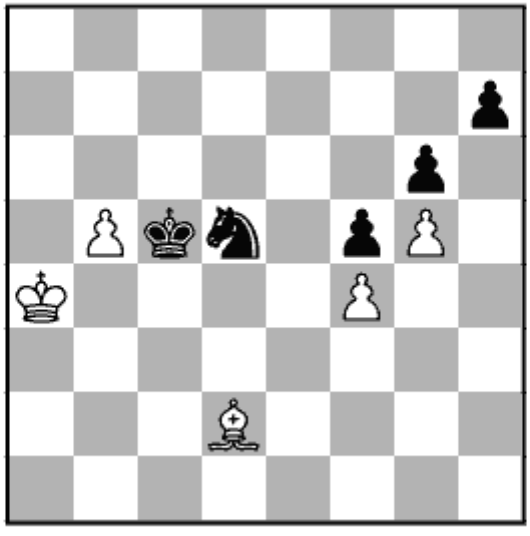
answer



Puzzle 259: Black to play

Black has two tempting moves, but one of them lets White escape his fate.

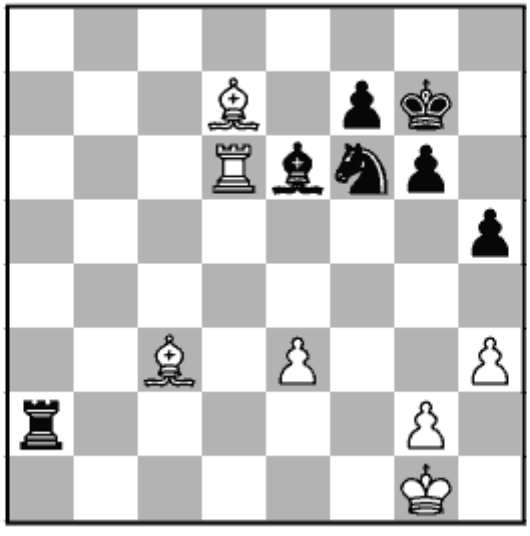
answer



Puzzle 260: Black to play

Evaluate the position and find the best continuation.

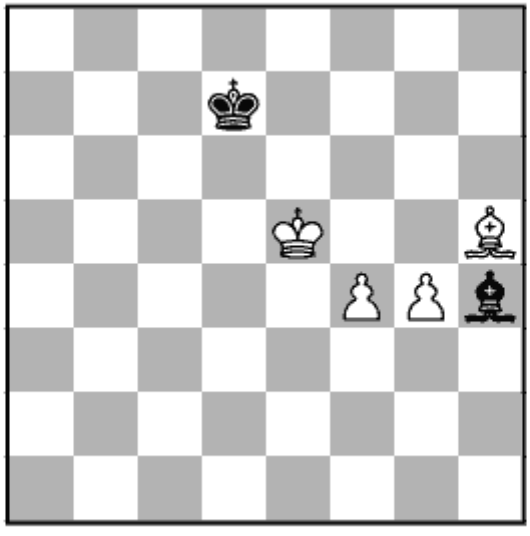
answer



Puzzle 261: Black to play

Black appears to have big problems. How can he save himself?

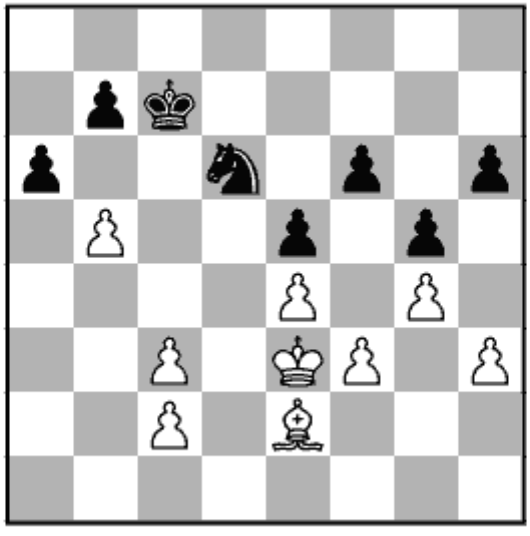
answer



Puzzle 262: White to play

With opposite-coloured bishops, even two extra pawns don't always guarantee a win, so care is needed here.

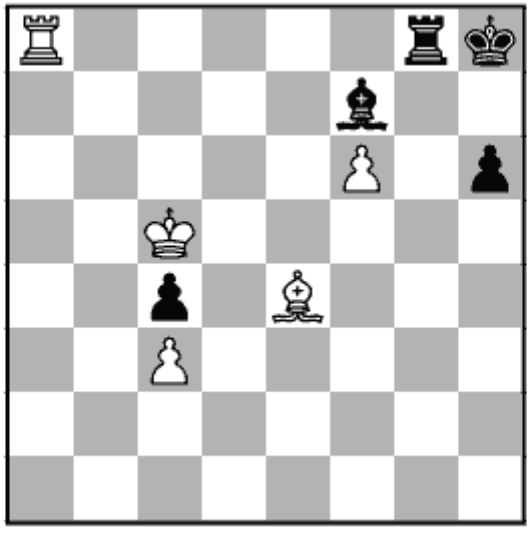
answer



Puzzle 263: Black to play

How can Black secure a decisive advantage?

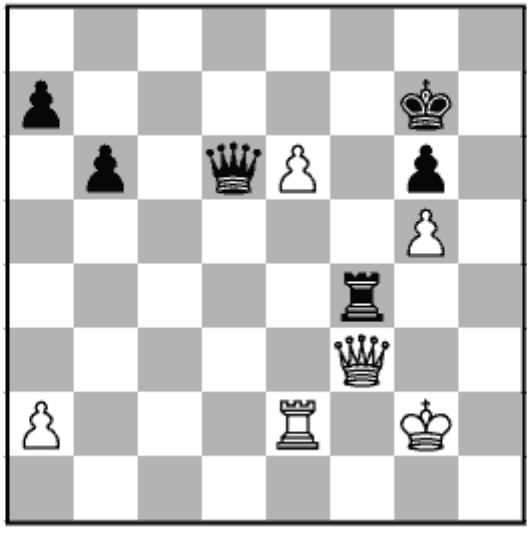
answer



Puzzle 264: White to play

In the game, White threw away the win with his next move, even though it looked very natural. What should he play?

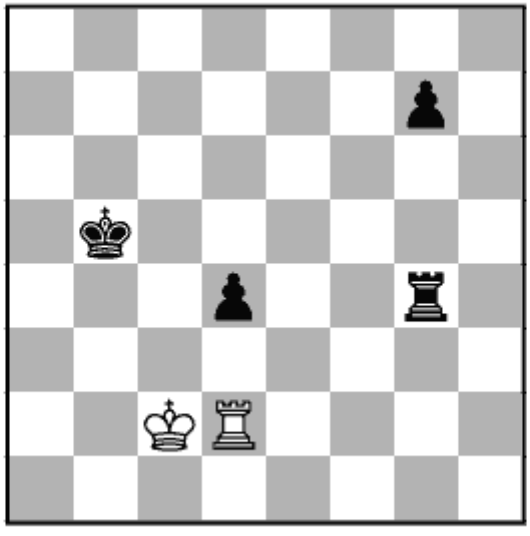
answer



Puzzle 265: White to play

White has a number of tempting moves, but only one of them wins.

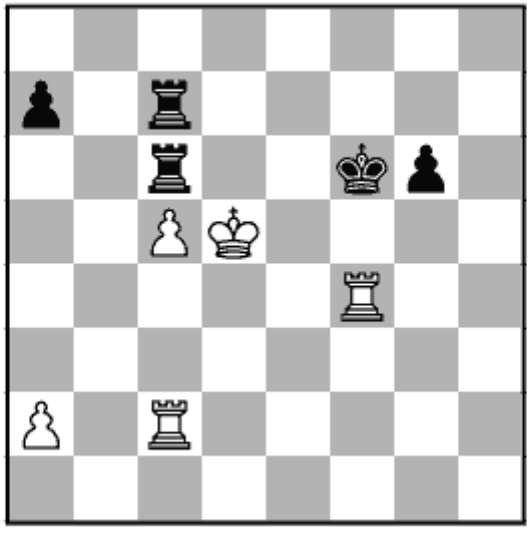
answer



Puzzle 266: White to play

White’s position looks hopeless, but he has a way to save himself. How?

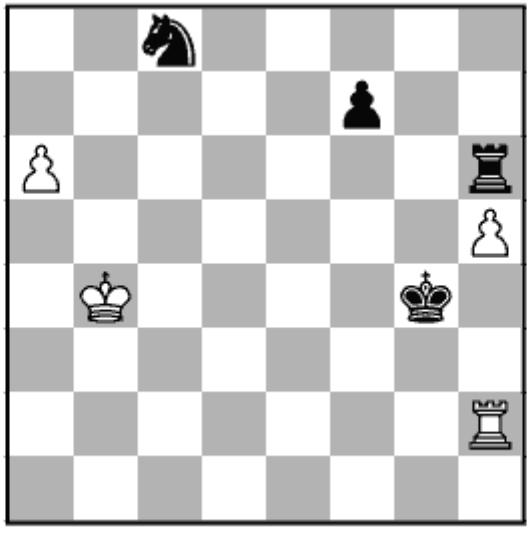
answer



Puzzle 267: Black to play

White has a strong c-pawn. How can Black nevertheless draw?

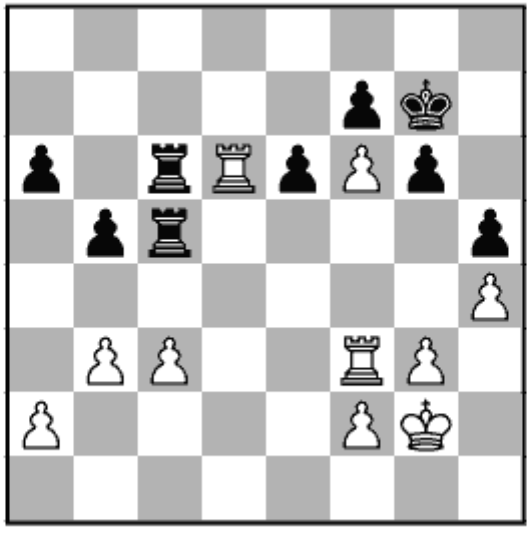
answer



Puzzle 268: White to play

White can hang on thanks to his a6-pawn. But he must start off with a strong move.

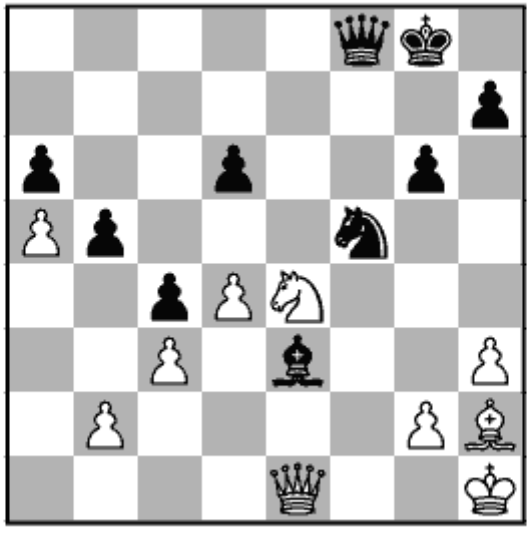
answer



Puzzle 269: Black to play

Where should the king go?

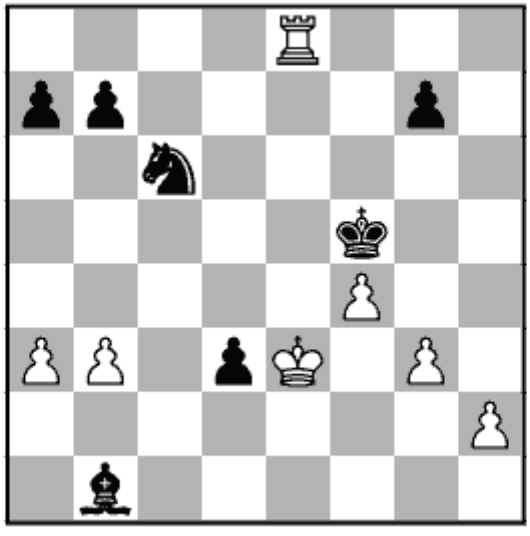
answer



Puzzle 270: Black to play

Black has some problems. How should he solve them?

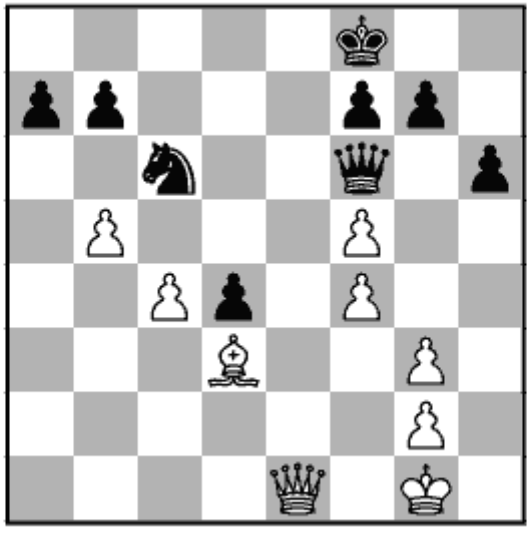
answer



Puzzle 271: Black to play

Black found a nice way to win. What was it?

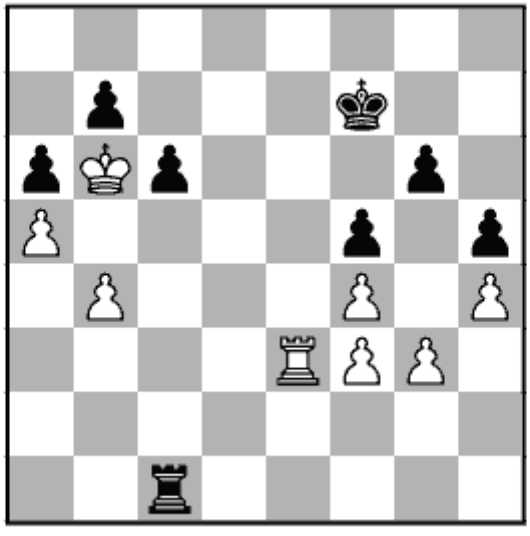
answer



Puzzle 272: Black to play

Black must defend well to avoid getting into a bad position.

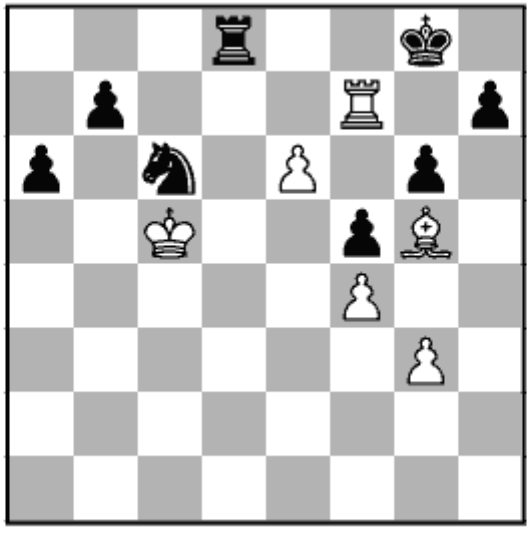
answer



Puzzle 273: Black to play

Black seems to be in trouble. How should he be saved?

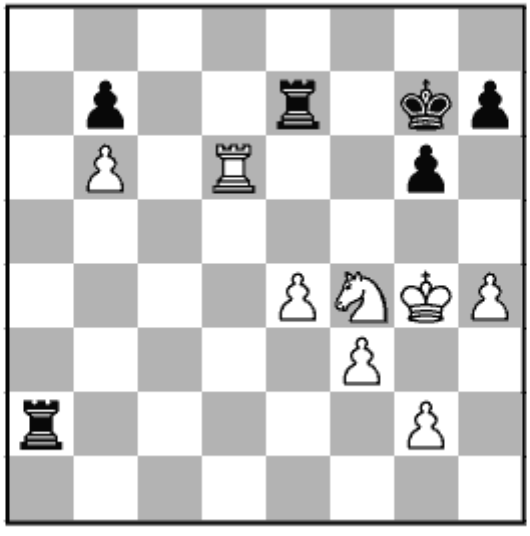
answer



Puzzle 274: Black to play

Black’s king is in danger. How can he survive?

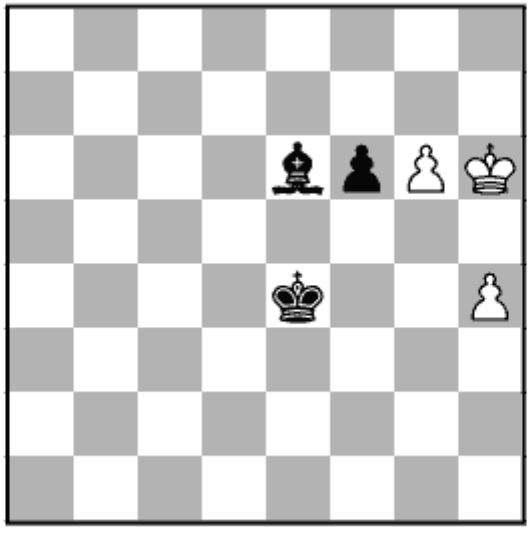
answer



Puzzle 275: Black to play

White is obviously better due to his active pieces. But do you see a way for Black to defend?

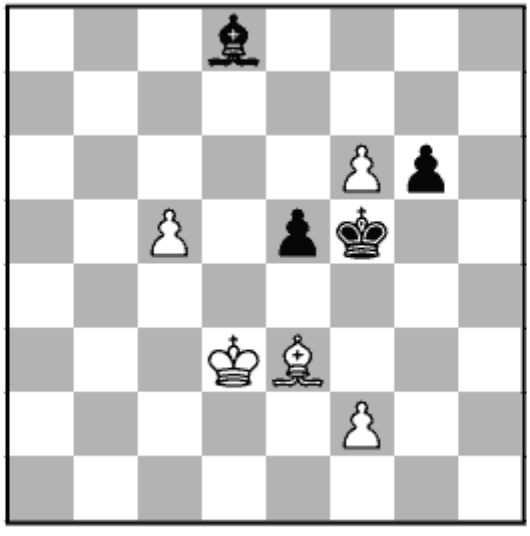
answer



Puzzle 276: Black to play

The game ended in a draw. Show how Black could have done better.

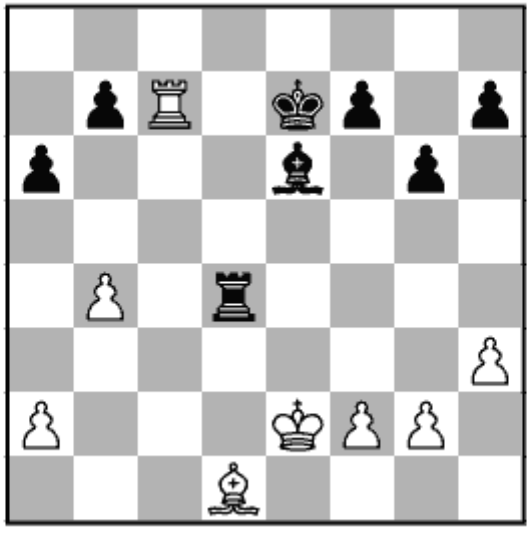
answer



Puzzle 277: Black to play

How should Black take on f6?

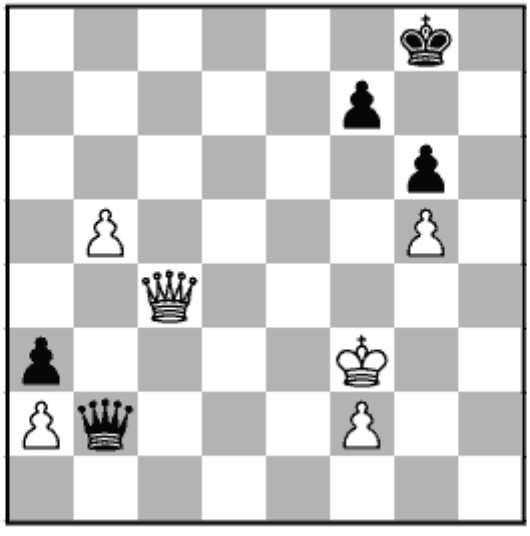
answer



Puzzle 278: Black to play

Does Black have a way to play for a win?

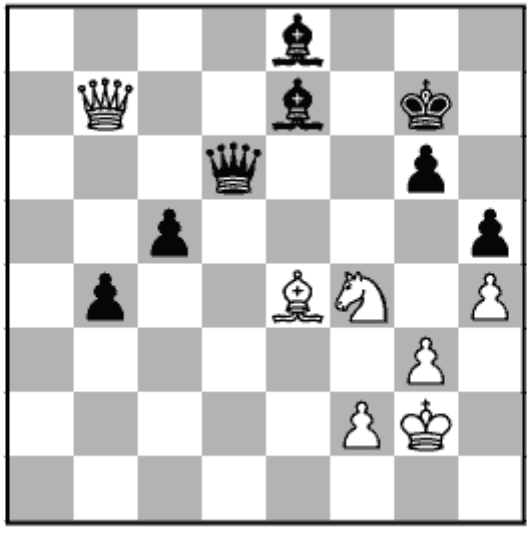
answer



Puzzle 279: Black to play

The situation looks hopeless, but Black has a way to save himself.

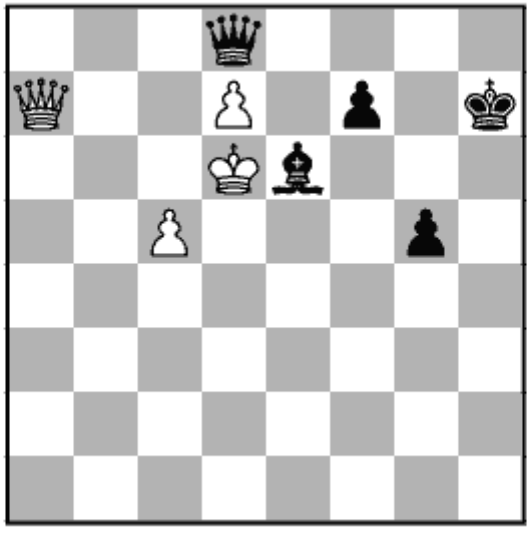
answer



Puzzle 280: White to play

Things look bad for White, but he has a way to hang on.

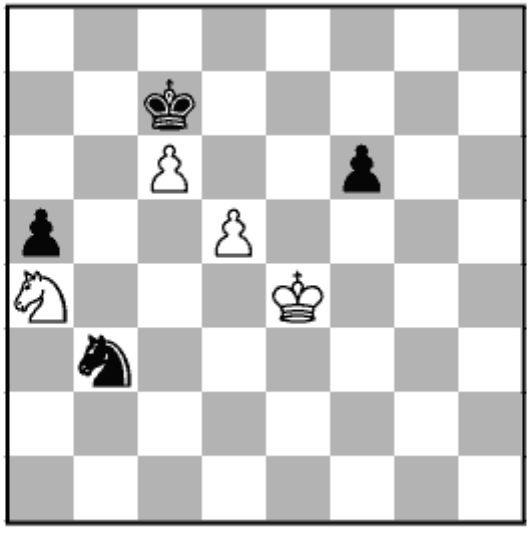
answer



Puzzle 281: Black to play

Black’s next move in the game allowed White to survive. Show how Black could have done better.

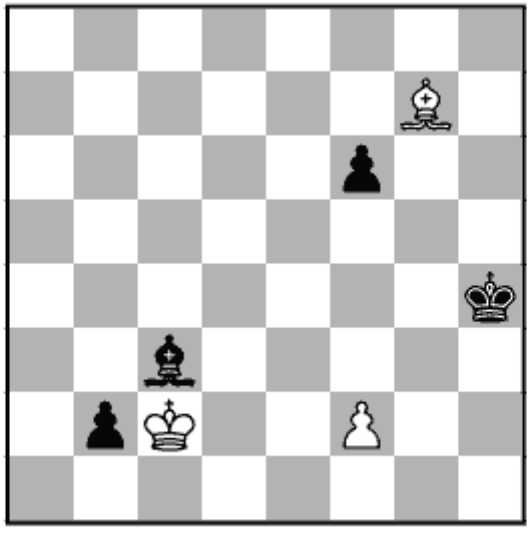
answer



Puzzle 282: Black to play

Endings with knights can be very tricky as they may need to use odd routes to get to their best squares.

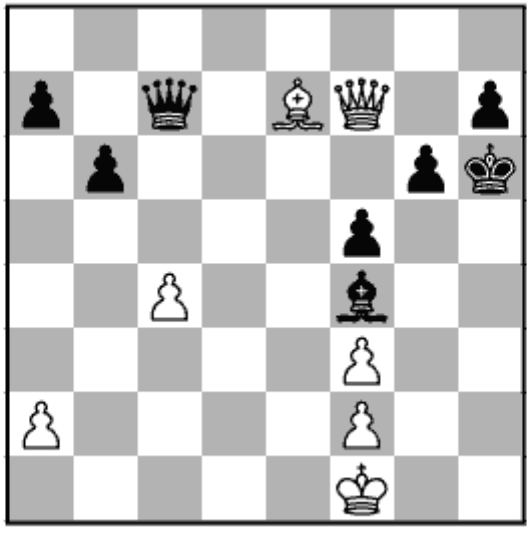
answer



Puzzle 283: White to play

Usually, the fewer pieces there are, the easier the position is. But not always…

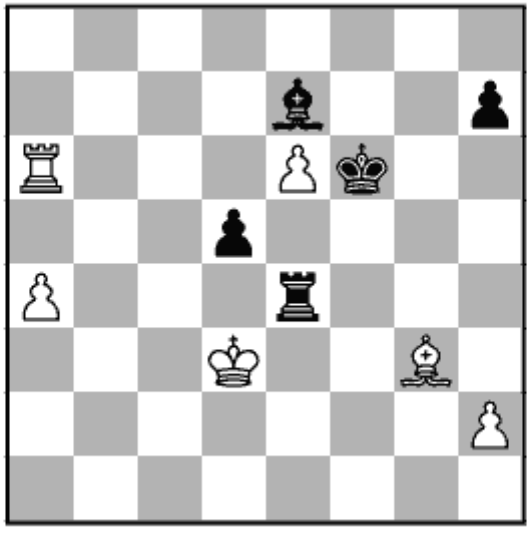
answer



Puzzle 284: Black to play

In the game Black lost by underestimating White's attack. What should Black play here?

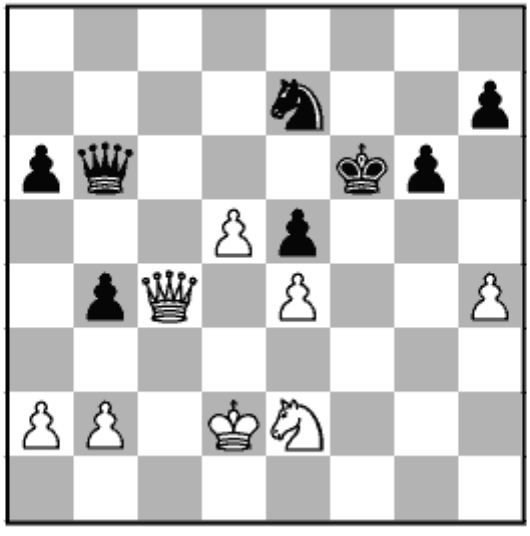
answer



Puzzle 285: Black to play

Can Black take the pawn on e6?

answer

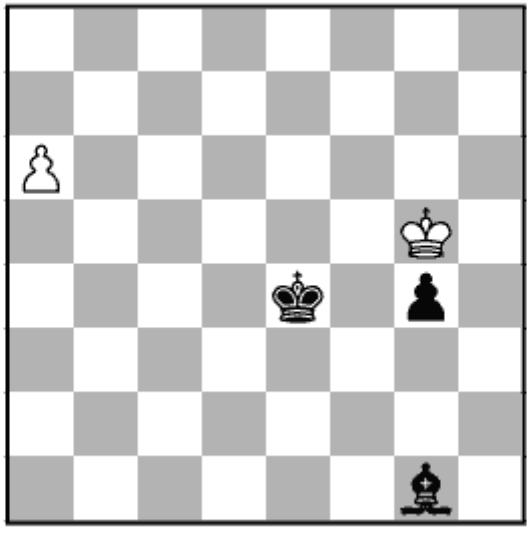


Puzzle 286: White to play

White has a distinct advantage, but only one path leads to victory.

answer

Solutions for Chapter 5



Solution 228: Black to play

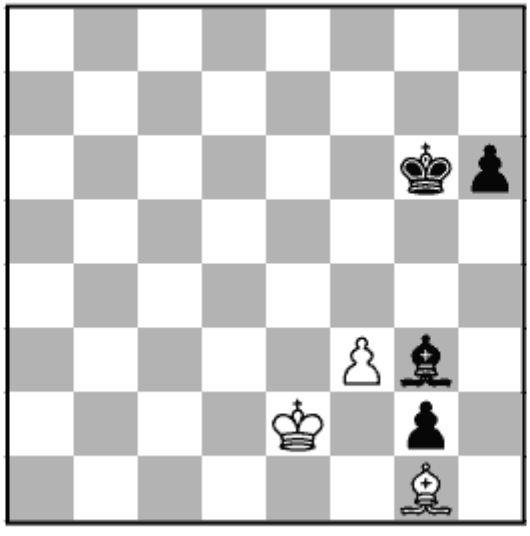
B.Stoyanov – H.Witt

Hastings 2018/19

After 49…g3? 50 Kg4! Black loses his pawn; for example, 50…g2 51 Kg3 = or 50…Bf2 51 a7 =.

49…Kf3! –+ is correct, when the pawn safely advances and promotes.

back



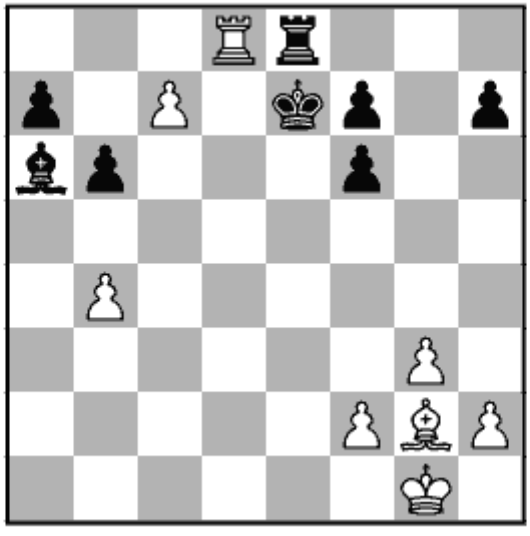
Solution 229: White to play

Valkama – Fernandez Barrera

Stockholm 2018/19

White must immediately open a path for this king to attack the g2-pawn: **55 f4!** (after 55 Ke3? Kf5 56 f4 Kg4! the black king is in time to hold the white king at bay: 57 f5 Bh4 –+) **55… Bxf4** (the game ended 55…Kf5 ½-½) **56 Kf3** with an easy draw.

back



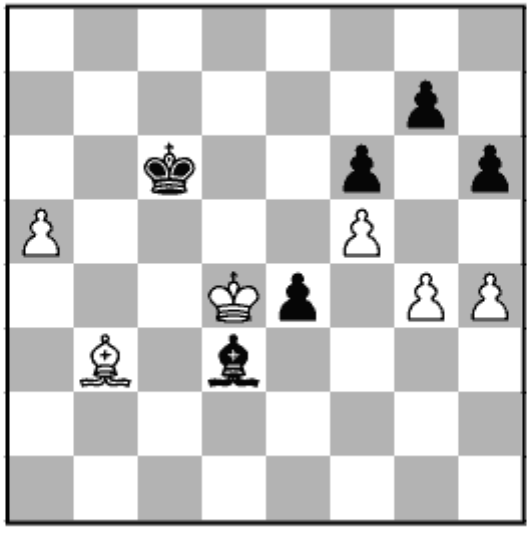
Solution 230: White to play

Zuo Yifan – Jiang Qinyu (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

After an exchange of rooks, White can usher his pawn forward: **29 Rxe8+!** (Black hangs on after the tempting 29 b5? Bc8, when White remains better, but it is not clear if he can win) **29…Kxe8 30 Bh3** +– and Black will lose his bishop and the game.

back



Solution 231: White to play

Ruiz Castillo – T.Coleman

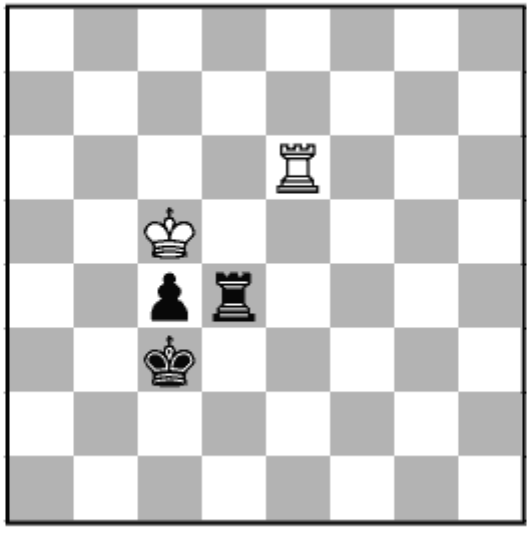
Burlingame 2019

72 Bd5+! 1-0

Not 72 Bc4? Bc2 73 Bd5+ Kb5 74 Bxe4 Bd1 =.

The move played caused resignation because Black can pick up the a5-pawn only at the cost of allowing a pawn ending that is completely lost: **72…Kb5** (72…Kd6 73 Bxe4 +– is a hopeless pawn-down bishop ending for Black) **73 Bxe4** (the key point is that Black has no way to avoid an exchange of bishops) **73…Be2** (73…Bxe4 74 Kxe4 Kxa5 75 Kd5 +–) **74 Bd3+! Bxd3 75 Kxd3 Kxa5 76 Kc4 +–** and the king goes to f7.

back



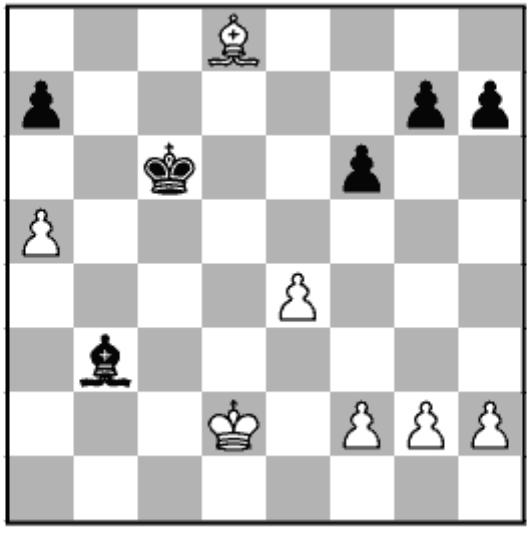
Solution 232: White to play

Kravtsiv – Lewtak

European Ch, Legnica 2013

67 Re3+! (67 Rh6? Rg4 68 Rh3+ Kb2 –+) **67…Rd3 68 Re4 =** and White will take the c4-pawn.

back



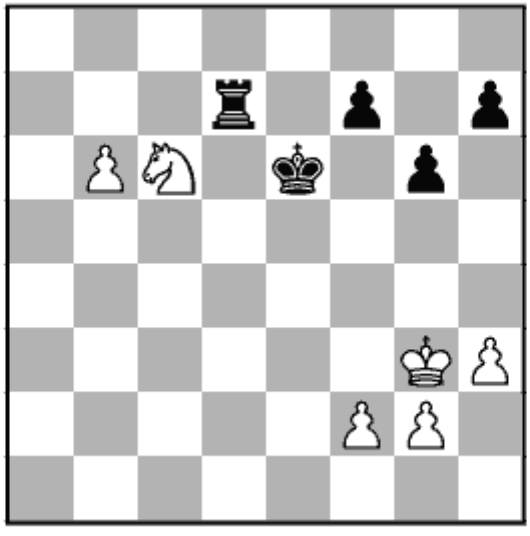
Solution 233: Black to play

Saidy – Kung (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black can trap the enemy bishop: **37…Kd7! 38 Kc3 Be6 –+**, with an extra piece.

back



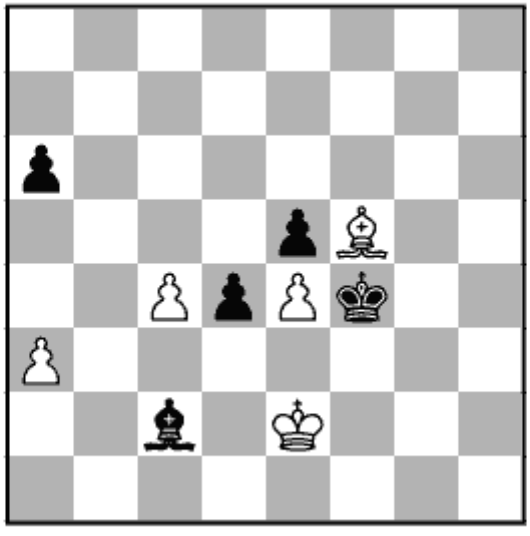
Solution 234: White to play

Hilby – Eswaran (variation)

Burlingame 2019

40 b7! Rxb7 41 Nd8+ +– and the fork leaves White a knight up.

back



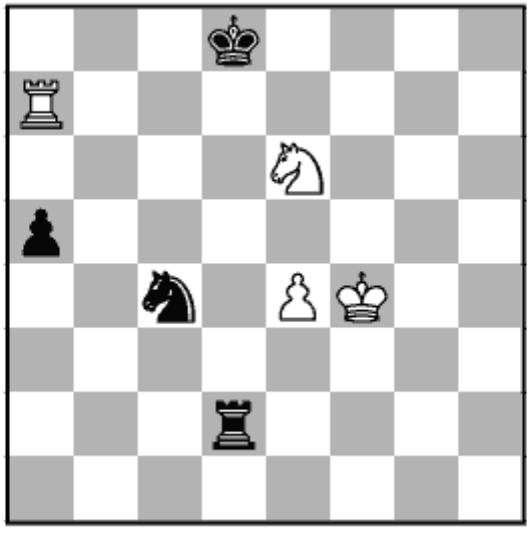
Solution 235: White to play

Javakhadze – A.Jacobson (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Yes, by advancing the c-pawn: **60 c5! Ba4** (60…Bxe4?? 61 Bxe4 Kxe4 62 c6 +–) **61 Kd2** with an equal position.

back



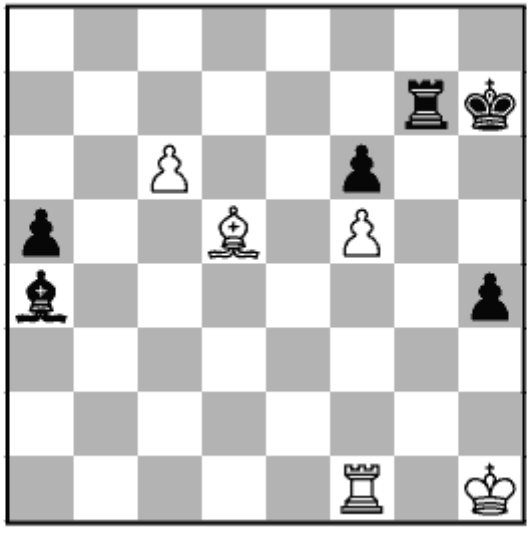
Solution 236: Black to play

Eames – Comellas (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

On c8 the king would suffer a devastating fork: 56…Kc8? 57 Rc7+ Kb8 58 Rxc4 +–. So **56…Ke8 57 Ng7+ Kf8 =** is correct.

back



Solution 237: White to play

Ynojosa – Ostrovskiy (variation)

Burlingame 2019

A double attack wins the bishop: **46 Rf4! Rc7** (Black can't save the bishop because it is not just a pawn that is threatened on h4, but mate! 46…Bd1 47 Rxh4+ Bh5 48 Rxh5#) **47 Rxh4+ Kg7 48 Rxa4** +–.

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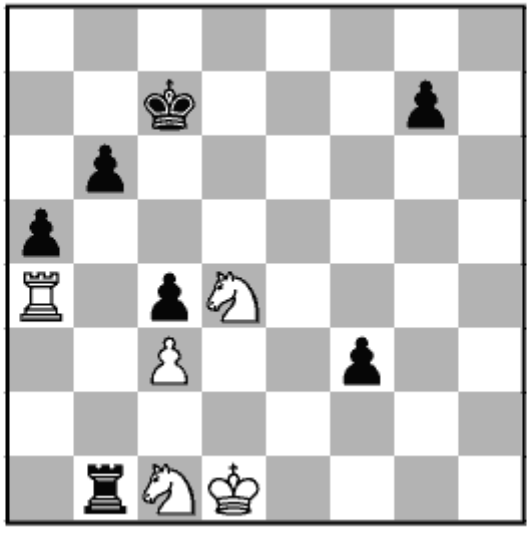


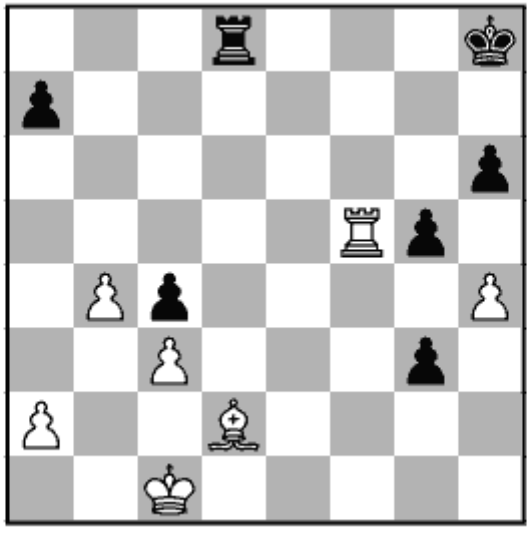
Solution 238: Black to play

Bellon – Ertan (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

Black must draw the white king away from the f-pawn: **36… Rxc1+!** (36…f2? 37 Rxc4+ Kb7 38 Ke2 +=) **37 Kxc1 f2 –+** and the pawn cannot be stopped.

back



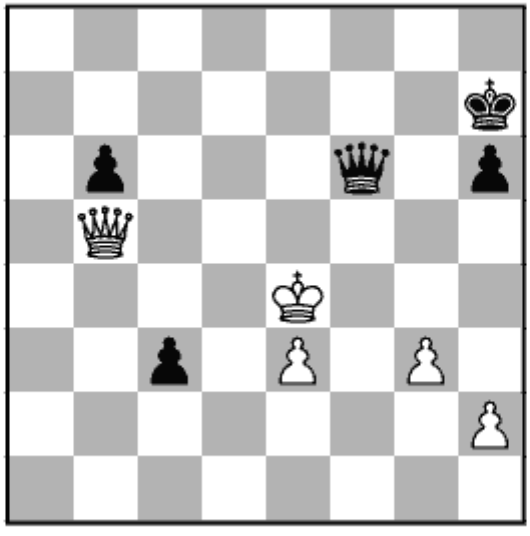
Solution 239: Black to play

Li Kam – C.Hunt

Tianjin 2018/19

He must remove the one piece that can stop the pawn: **37… Rxd2!** (not 37…Rd3? 38 Be1 gxh4 39 Rh5 with a roughly equal position) **38 Kxd2** (the game ended 38 Rf1 g2 39 Rg1 Rxa2 40 Kb1 Rf2 0-1) **38…g2** –+ and Black gets a new queen.

back



Solution 240: White to play

Kucuksari – An.Nielsen

Stockholm 2018/19

The white king must intercept the pawn – but without dropping his queen in the process!

52 Qd7+!

The game ended 52 Kd3?? Qf1+ 0-1. White is also not saved by 52 Qc4? c2! 53 g4 (53 Qxc2 Qg6+ –+) 53…b5 –+.

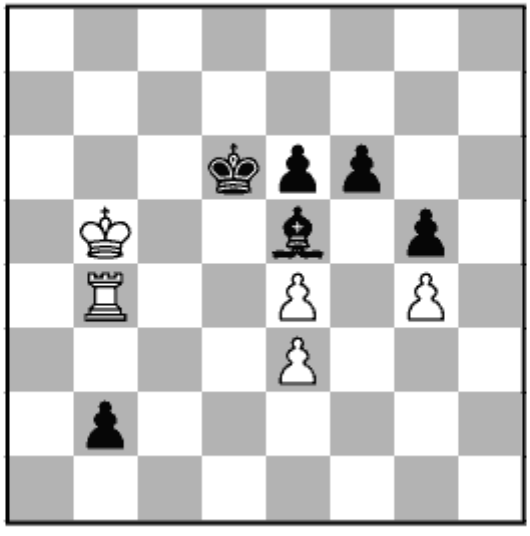
52…Kh8

52…Qg7?? loses to 53 Qxg7+ Kxg7 54 Kd3 +–.

53 Kd3 =

White has the c3-pawn comfortably surrounded.

back



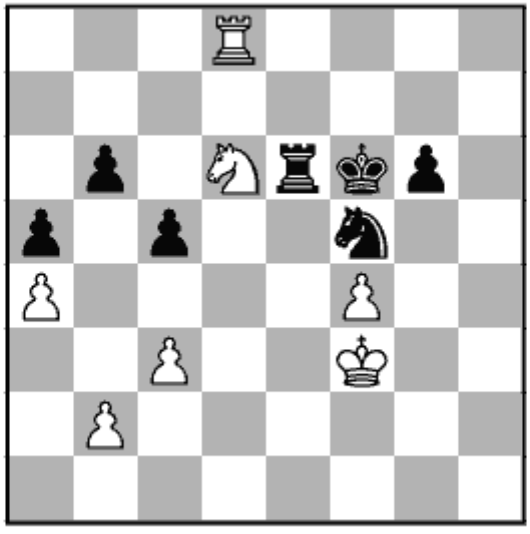
Solution 241: Black to play

F.Polyakov – Emmoth

Stockholm 2018/19

In the game 62…Bc3? 63 Rb3 = led to an equal position. For example, 63…Be5 (as played in the game) 64 Kc4 = or 63…f5 64 exf5 exf5 65 Kc4! Be5 66 gxf5 and the white king is in time to intercept the g-pawn. Black should have chosen **62… f5! 63 exf5 exf5 64 gxf5 g4! 65 Kc4 g3 –+**, as here the black pawn wins the race.

back



Solution 242: White to play

Lyrberg – Pranav

Stockholm 2018/19

The key weakness is the b6-pawn, and to exploit it White needs to preserve his knight.

39 Nc4!

Not: 39 Ne4+? Ke7 =; 39 Nxf5? gxf5 =.

39…Ne7

39…Ke7 40 Rb8 +–.

40 Kg4 +–

The b6-pawn is an insoluble problem for Black, since he can only defend it at a heavy cost, such as g6 dropping off. For example, **40…Kg7 41 Re8 Kf6** (41…Kf7 42 Rb8 Nd5 43 Ne5+ and now 43…Kg7 44 Kg5 +– or 43…Kf6 44 Rg8 +–) **42 Ne5 Kg7** (42…Nd5 43 Rxe6+ +–) **43 Kg5 +–**.

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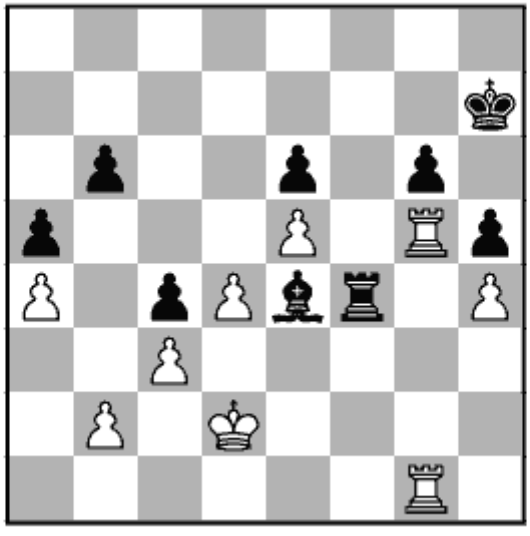


Solution 243: White to play

K.Holm – Sandu (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

The best defence is attack!

31 d5!

Not 31 Ke3? Rxh4 =.

After 31 R5g3?! Bf5! (not 31…Rxh4? 32 d5 +–) things aren't looking so bad for Black. While 32 Re3 is still difficult for Black (the point being 32…Rxh4 33 d5), it is far from clearly lost.

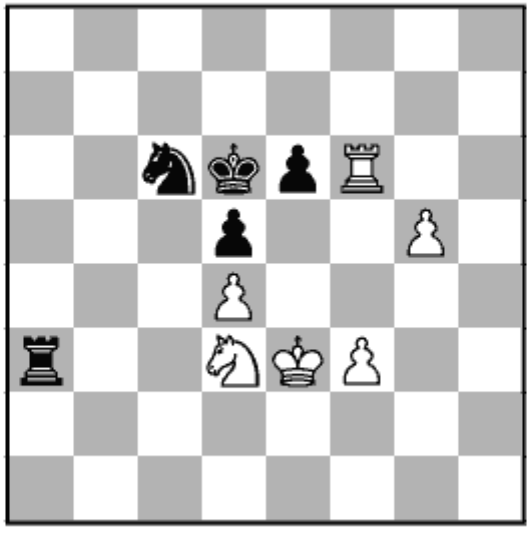
31…exd5

31…Bxd5 32 Rxg6 Rxh4 33 Rg7+ Kh8 +– offers White a lot of winning moves, the simplest being 34 Rc7.

32 e6 Rf8 33 Re5 Re8 34 Ke3 +–

Now that the king has a way in, White wins easily.

back



Solution 244: Black to play

H.Sörensen – Tryggestad

Stockholm 2018/19

Black has no time to win the knight on d3, and must play carefully to halt the white g-pawn.

61…Ke7!

Not:

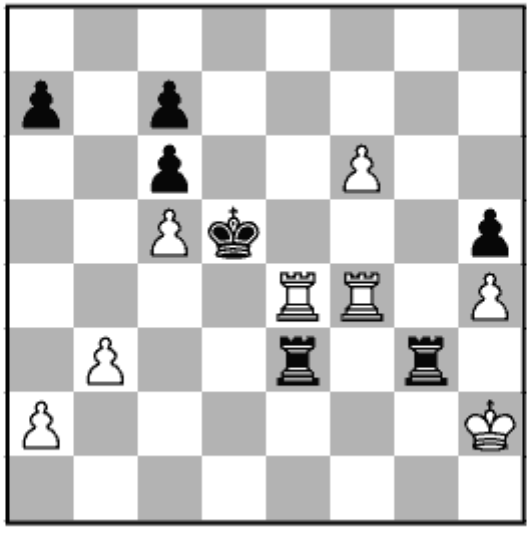
a) 61…Nb4? 62 g6 Nxd3 (62…Rxd3+ 63 Ke2 Ra3 64 g7 +–) 63 g7 +–, winning.

b) 61…Ne7? 62 g6 Nf5+ 63 Kf4! Rxd3 64 Rxf5 and the pawn can't be stopped: 64…exf5 65 g7 +– or 64…Rxd4+ 65 Ke3 +–.

62 Kd2 Nxd4

with an equal position.

back



Solution 245: Black to play

Lyell – Midhun

Hastings 2018/19

Black's sole hope is perpetual check.

38…Ref3!

38…Rxe4? loses to 39 Kxg3 +–, while in the game Black played 38…Rh3+? 39 Kg2 Reg3+ 40 Kf2 +–, when the king was off the hook and the f-pawn decisive.

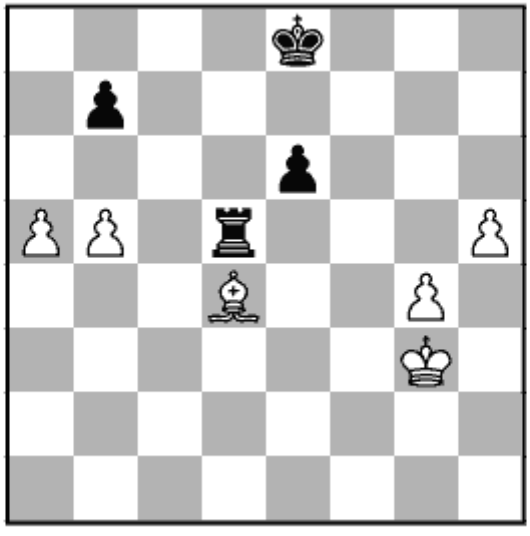
39 Rxf3

39 f7 Rh3+ 40 Kg2 Rhg3+ = with perpetual check.

39…Rxf3 40 Ra4 Rxf6 41 Rxa7 Kxc5 =

with an equal endgame.

back



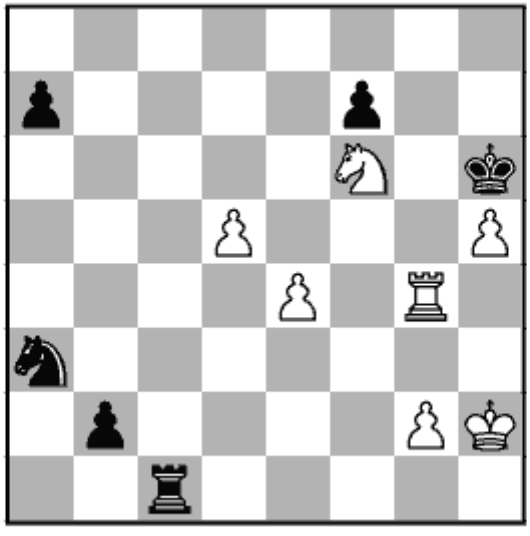
Solution 246: White to play

Bellia – Slugin

Stockholm 2018/19

The white bishop is under attack, but rather than moving it, White should seize the chance to promote his pawn: **49 h6!** (not 49 Ba1? Kf7 =) and there's no way to stop the pawn. For example, **49…Rxd4 50 h7 Rd3+ 51 Kh4 +–**.

back



Solution 247: White to play

Vestby-Ellingsen – H.Sörensen (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

36 Ng8+!

Not 36 d6? Rf1!, when Black wins. For example: 37 d7 b1Q 38 d8Q Rh1+ with a mating attack.

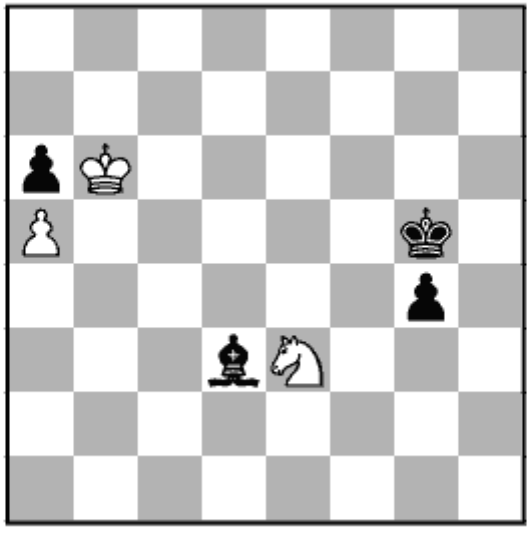
36…Kxh5

36…Kh7 37 Nf6+ = and the black king can't go to h8 because of the mate.

37 Nf6+ Kh6 38 Ng8+ =

with perpetual check.

back



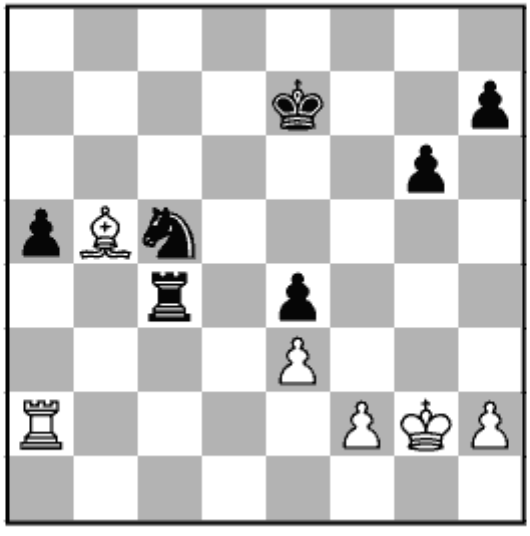
Solution 248: White to play

Regmi – Larmet (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

62 Nxg4! (White mustn't delay: after 62 Kc5? g3 63 Kd4 Bb5 –+ he will not get another chance to sacrifice his knight for the pawn) **62…Kxg4 63 Kc5 Kf4 64 Kd4 =**. The king heads towards a1 and the standard 'bishop and wrong rook's pawn' draw is clear.

back



Solution 249: Black to play

R.Kaufman – B.Jacobson (variation)

Burlingame 2019

40…Rb4 41 Rxa5 (41 Be2 a4 –+) **41…Nb7!** (a dual-purpose move: the knight attacks the rook and blocks the possible check on a7; not 41…Nb3? 42 Ra7+ +/–) **42 Ra4 Rxb5 43 Rxe4+ Kf6 –+** and Black should win.

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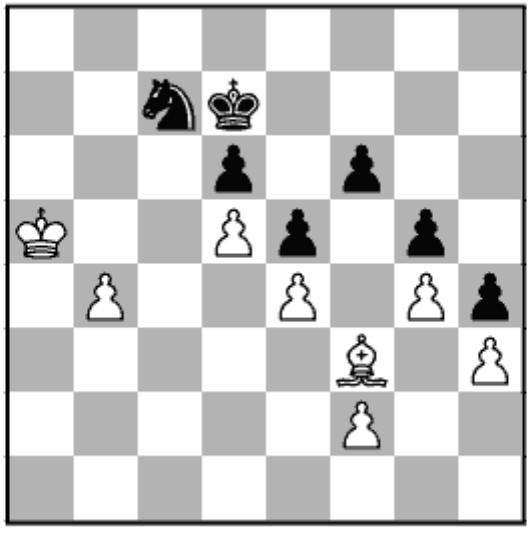

Solution 250: Black to play

Faulks – Choi

Hastings 2018/19

Black needs to blockade on a dark square, and the obvious choice is b6. Once you've realized that, it is clear where the knight must go: **46…Na8!** (the game featured 46…Kc8? 47 Kb6 Kd7 48 Bd1 +– with an easy win for White) **47 Ka6 Kc7 48 Be2 Nb6 =**. Black has created a fortress. White has no way through.

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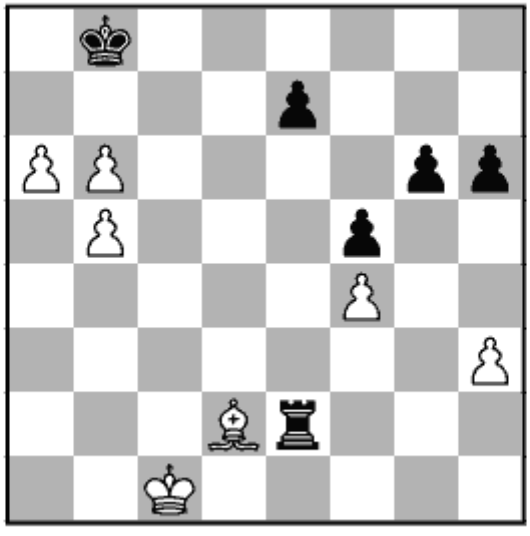

Solution 251: Black to play

Ritviz – Das (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

43…Re6! 44 b7 (44 Ba5? g5 –+) **44…Rb6** (Black picks up the b5-pawn and can then fend off the remaining two passed pawns) **45 Bc3 Rxb5 46 Be5+ Rxe5!?** (46…Ka7 47 h4 Rxe5 =) **47 fxe5 f4** with a drawn position as neither king can advance very far without letting an enemy pawn promote.

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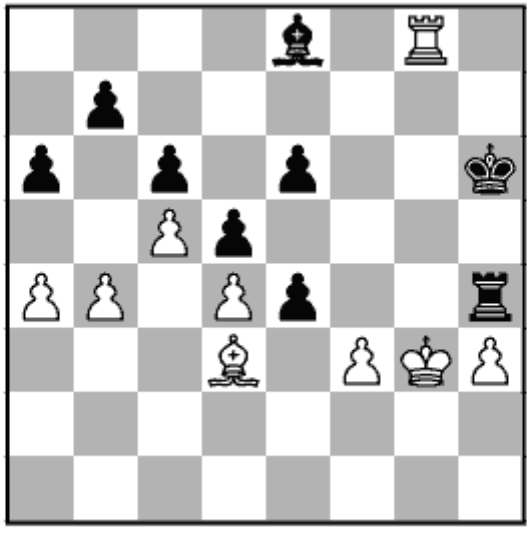


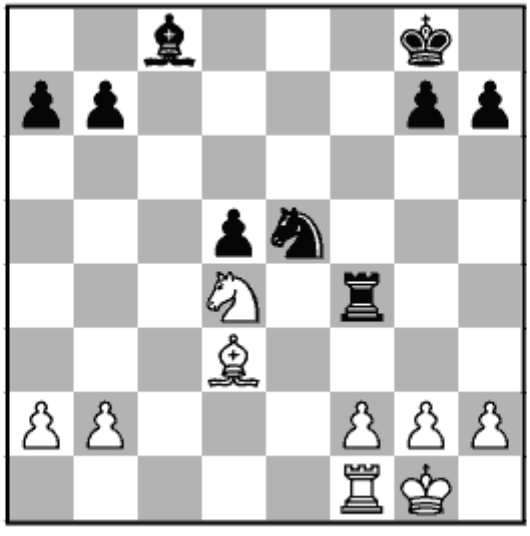
Solution 252: Black to play

Kurbonboeva – V.Kulkarni

Mumbai 2018/19

40…exd3! 41 Kxh4 (41 Rxe8 d2 –+ was played in the game) **41…Bg6! –+**. The rook's way back is blocked, so White can't stop the d-pawn.

back



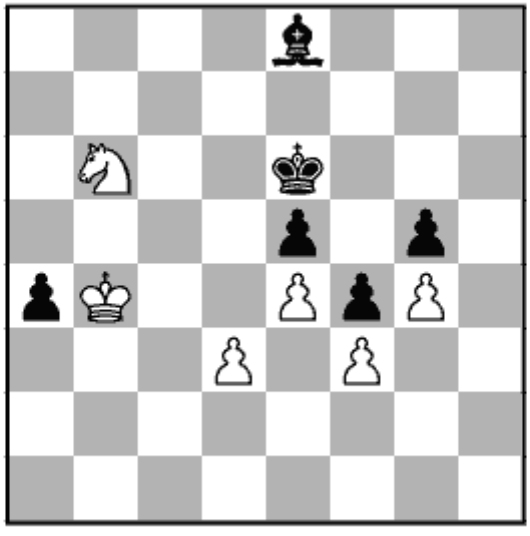
Solution 253: White to play

Ameir – Subhayan

Mumbai 2018/19

In the endgame, a rook and a pawn are often a good match for bishop and knight, especially if the rook is active and has plenty of targets. That suggests **23 Rd1!** (not 23 Ne2? Nxd3 24 Nxf4 Nxf4 –/+) **23…Rxd4 24 Bxh7+ Kxh7 25 Rxd4 Be6** (as played in the game) **26 f3** with a playable and roughly equal position.

back



Solution 254: Black to play

Gajek – Kurbonboeva

Mumbai 2018/19

41…Kd6! 42 Nc4+ (42 Nxa4? loses to 42…Bxa4 43 Kxa4 Kc5 –+) **42…Ke6 43 Nb2 Kd6 44 Nc4+ ½-½**. White can't take the pawn, so the game is balanced.

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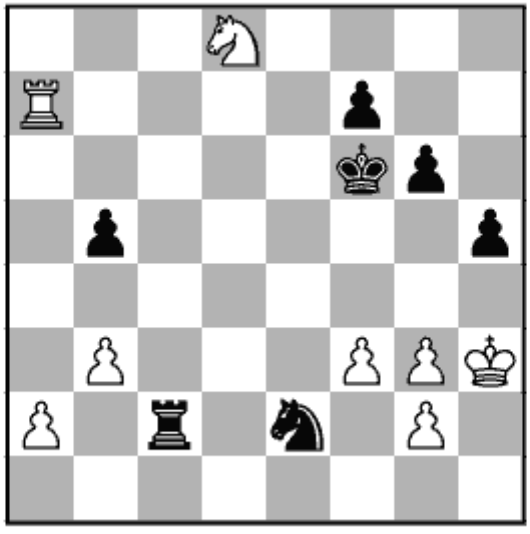

Solution 255: Black to play

V.Kulkarni – Z.Rahman

Mumbai 2018/19

40…Ng1+! 41 Kh4 (41 Kh2 Nxf3+ –+) **41…Nxf3+!** (suddenly, the king proves very useful on f6; not 41…Rxg2? 42 Rxf7+ =) **42 Kh3** (42 gxf3 Rh2#) **42…Ne5** leaves the white king in a hopeless predicament: **43 a4** (43 Ra6+, as played in the game, is met by 43…Ke7 –+) **43…g5 44 axb5 g4+** with mate in a few moves.

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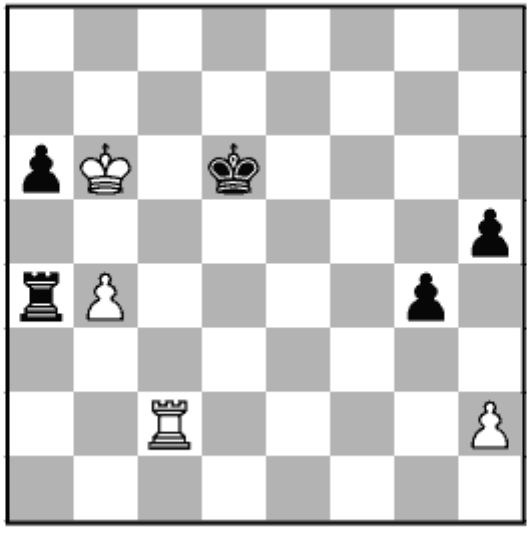


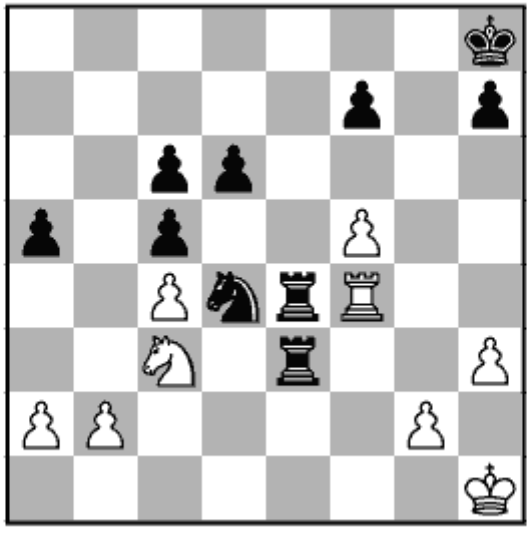
Solution 256: White to play

Kathmale – Khusenkhojaev

Mumbai 2018/19

He needs to attack the h-pawn from behind: **61 Rc6+! Ke7** (61…Ke5, as played in the game, is met by 62 Rh6 =) **62 Rh6!** (not 62 Rc5? Rxb4+ 63 Kxa6 h4 –+) **62…Rxb4+ 63 Kxa6** with an equal position.

back



Solution 257: White to play

Kravtsiv – Ahmadinia

Dubai 2012

In fact, his choice is between giving up a pawn or a knight! **35 Rxe4** (not 35 Nxe4? due to 35…Ne2! 36 Rg4 Rxe4 37 Rxe4 Ng3+ –+) **35…Nxf5** (as played in the game) **36 Rf4** and White is worse, but should be able to hold the draw without too much trouble: **36…Re1+** (36…Re5 37 g4 =+) **37 Kh2 Ne3 38 Kg3 =+**.

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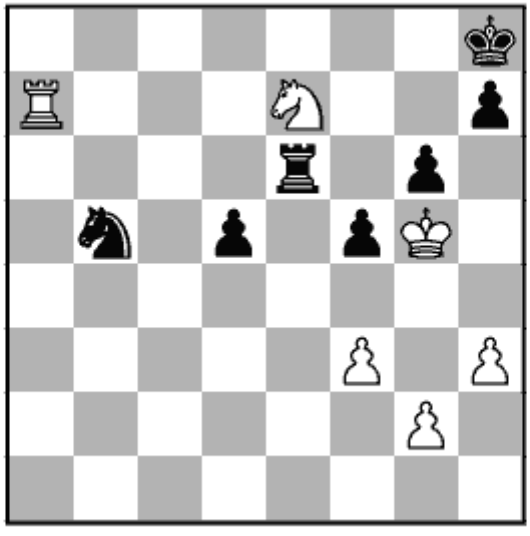


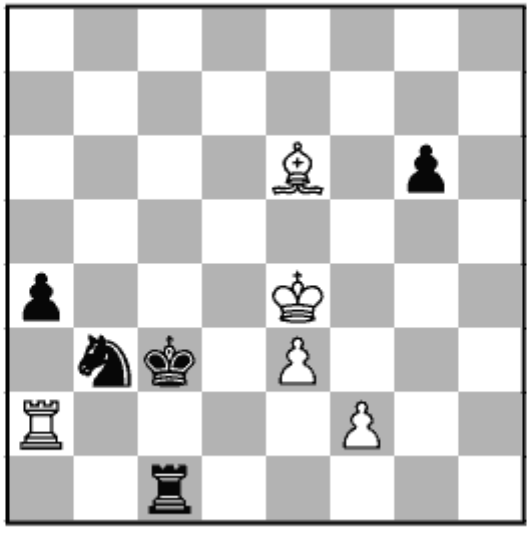
Solution 258: White to play

Saurabh – Das

Mumbai 2018/19

White can win as long as he keeps the black king in its hopeless predicament: **41 Rd7!** (both 41 Ra8+? Kg7 42 Nxd5 = and 41 Rb7? Nd6 =+ allow Black to get his king safely out of the corner) **41…Rd6** (41…Nd6 42 Nxd5 Ne8 43 Kh6 +–; 41…d4 42 Kh6 +–) **42 Rb7** and Black resigned in view of **42…Nd4 43 Kh6 g5+ 44 Kxg5** with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 259: Black to play

R.Kaufman – B.Jacobson

Burlingame 2019

49…Rc2!

49…Nc5+? 50 Ke5 Nxe6 (50…Rc2 51 Ra1! =+) 51 Rxa4! and White should hold the draw.

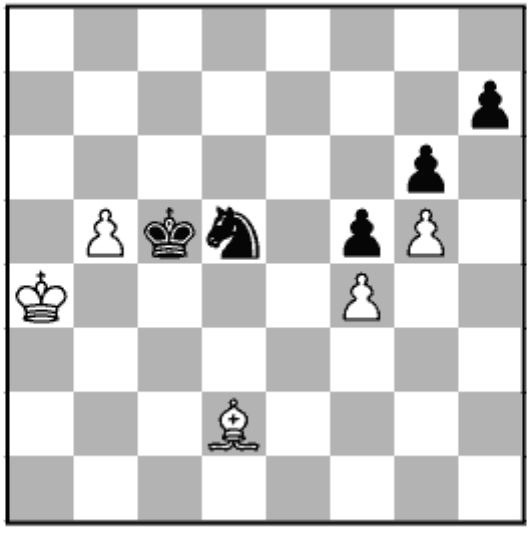
50 Rxc2+

Or: 50 Rxa4 Nc5+ –+; 50 Ra3 Kb4 51 Bxb3 axb3 –+ (played in the game).

50…Kxc2 –+

White can't stop the a-pawn.

back



Solution 260: Black to play

Larmet – Laoussing

Mumbai 2018/19

Black can hold as long as he doesn't try to win the white b-pawn.

62…Kb6!

Not 62…Nb6+? 63 Ka5, and then:

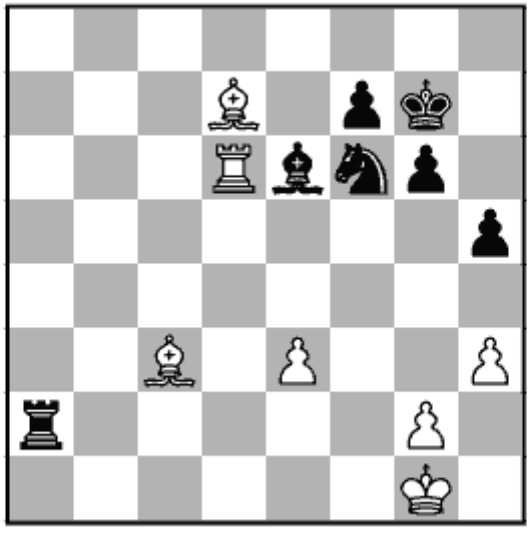
a) Black is not saved by 63…Nd5 64 Bc1 Kd6 65 Ka6 Nc7+ 66 Kb6 Nd5+ (66…Kd7 67 Kc5 +–) 67 Ka7 Kc5 68 b6 +–.

b) After 63…Nc4+ 64 Ka6 Nxd2 65 b6 +– (as played in the game) the pawn will promote.

63 Ba5+ Kb7 64 Bd2 Kb6 =

with an equal position.

back



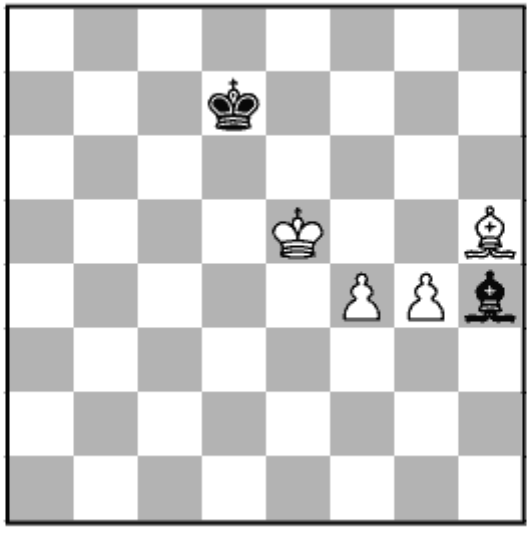
Solution 261: Black to play

Kravtsiv – Van den Doel (variation)

Roosendaal 2012

Black must distract and deflect White's dark-squared bishop:
41…Ra3! (41…Rc2? 42 Bd4 +–; 41…Bxd7? 42 Bxf6+ +–)
42 Bd4 Rxe3! 43 Bxe3 Nxd7 with a drawn ending, although Black will still have to defend with some care.

back



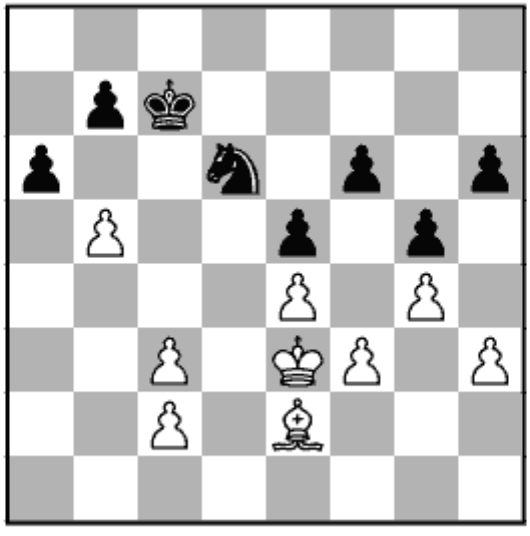
Solution 262: White to play

Deepan – Rajesh (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White needs to bring his king to g6 to help shepherd the pawns forward: **75 Kf5! Bg3** (75…Ke7 76 Kg6 +–) **76 Kg5!** (not 76 g5? Ke7 77 Bd1 Kf7 with a draw) **76…Ke7 77 f5 Be5 78 Kg6** and White wins.

back



Solution 263: Black to play

R.Shah – Bhasima

Mumbai 2018/19

It's essential to evaluate the pawn ending correctly.

31…Nxb5!

A clean win. Other moves are far less effective:

a) The game featured 31…axb5? 32 Kd2 =+.

b) 31…a5?! 32 Kd2 Kb6 33 c4 Kc5 34 Kc3 with good chances to resist.

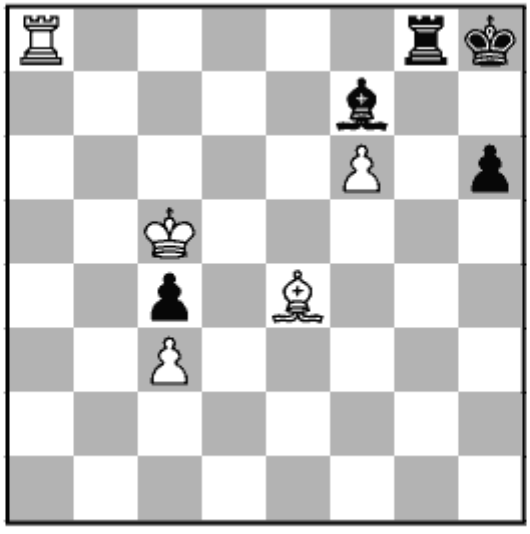
32 Bxb5

After 32 Kd2 Nd6 –+ White has no chance of surviving.

32…axb5 33 Kd3 Kd6 34 Ke3 Kc5 35 Kd3 b4 –+

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 264: White to play

Sari – B.Lindberg

Stockholm 2018/19

White should advance his king to e7, since then he wins even with the rooks exchanged.

64 Kd6!

At first glance it is worth playing 64 Ra7? (as chosen in the game) since it keeps the rook active, but after 64…Bg6 Black holds the position. For example: 65 Bd5 (65 Bxg6 Rxg6 66 Ra8+ Rg8 =) 65…Rf8.

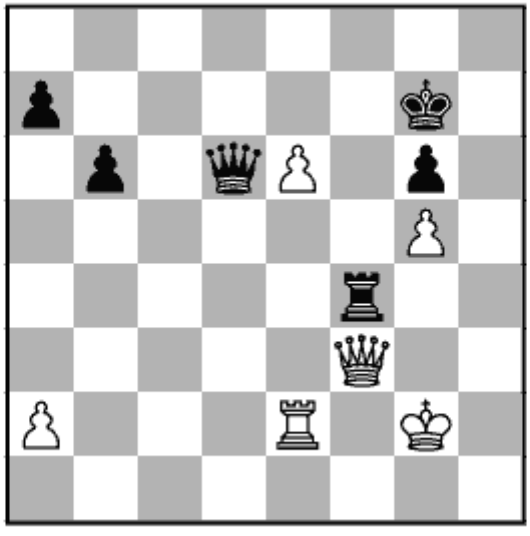
64…Rxa8 65 Bxa8 Kg8

65…h5 66 Ke7 Kg8 comes to the same thing.

66 Ke7 h5 67 Bc6 h4

Now White has two ways to win: 68 Be8 +– or 68 Bg2 Bh5 69 Bd5+ +–.

back



Solution 265: White to play

Koykka – Kolbus

Stockholm 2018/19

The solution is not very complicated, but the main challenge is to avoid the false paths.

38 e7!

Not:

a) 38 Qb7+? Kg8 39 Qc8+ (39 e7? Rg4+ –+) 39…Qf8 =.

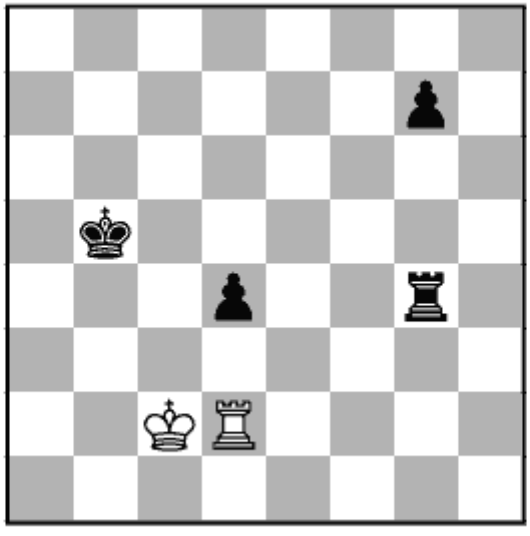
b) 38 Qc3+? (chosen in the game) 38…Kg8! = and White can't play 39 e7? because of 39…Qd5+ –+.

c) 38 Qh3? Qd5+ 39 Kh2 Qd6!? 40 Qh6+ Kg8 41 Qxg6+ Kh8 = and White must settle for giving perpetual check.

38…Rxf3 39 e8N+ Kf8 40 Nxd6

with a decisive advantage.

back



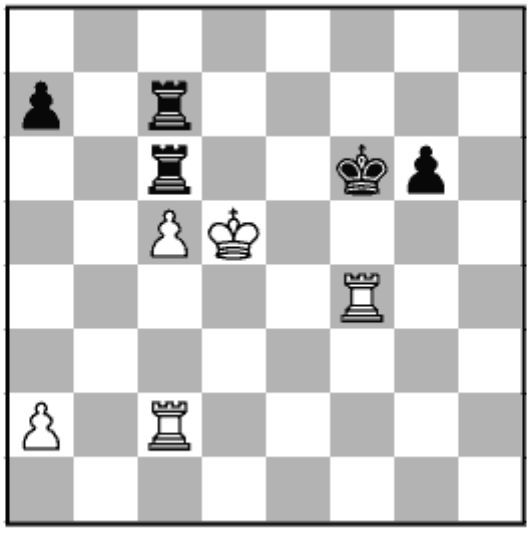
Solution 266: White to play

Bellia – Soysal (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

62 Kd3! Kc5 (62…g5 63 Rc2 Rf4 64 Rc1 g4 65 Rc8 = and Black has no way to advance his pawns) **63 Rc2+! Kd5** (63… Kd6!? is a better try, but after the accurate 64 Re2! g5 65 Kc4 Rf4 66 Re1 g4 67 Re8 = Black can't strengthen his position; for example, 67…Kd7 68 Re5 Kd6 69 Re8 =) **64 Rg2! =**. This stalemate idea is the key resource that enables White to save the game. Well done if you spotted it!

back



Solution 267: Black to play

Bai Xue – Mi Tenglong

Tianjin 2018/19

Black must bring his king to the queenside without delay.

46…Ke7!

Other moves fail:

a) After 46…Kg5? 47 Rf8 White wins by bringing his rook to d6. 47…Kh5 (as played in the game) is met by 48 Rd8 Rf6 (48…g5 49 Rd6 +–) 49 c6 +–.

b) 46…Kg7? 47 Re4 and without the king's help, the black rooks can't stop the c-pawn on their own: 47…Kf6 (47…Rc8 48 Re6 R6c7 49 c6 +–) 48 Rf2+ Kg5 (48…Kg7 49 Re7+ +–) 49 Re5+ Kg4 50 Rc2 and Black's position is hopeless: 50… Rf6 (50…g5 51 Re6 +–) 51 c6 +–.

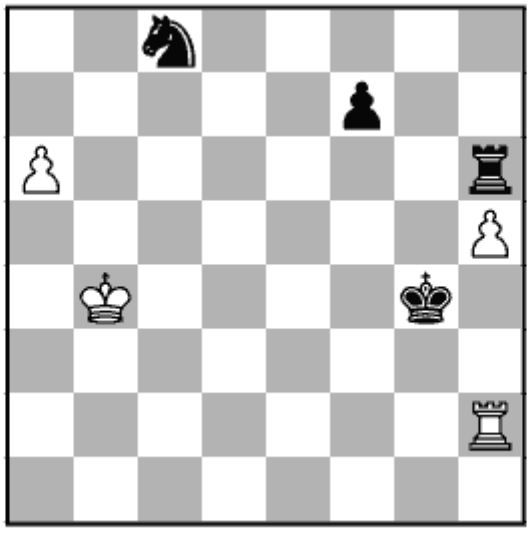
47 Re2+

Or: 47 Rh4 Rf6 48 Rh7+ Kd8 =; 47 Re4+ Kd7 48 Rh4 Rd6+ = (but not 48…Rf6? 49 c6+! +–).

47…Kd7 48 Rf7+ Kc8

and Black is fine. For example, **49 Rf8+** (49 Re8+ Kb7 50 Rxc7+ Rxc7 =) **49…Kd7!?** (49…Kb7 50 Rb2+ Ka6 51 Rc2 Kb7 =) **50 Rc2 Rd6+ =** (or 50…Ke7 =).

back



Solution 268: White to play

Li Yankai – Peng Xiongjian

Tianjin 2018/19

It is important to appreciate that Black can't take the h5-pawn yet, as right now the P vs N+P ending would be drawn, but that will not be the case if Black has time to play 55…f5.

55 Rg2+!

White forces the issue. He loses after 55 Ra2? f5 –+, 55 Kb5? f5 56 Rg2+ (as played in the game) 56…Kh4 57 Rg8 Na7+ 58 Ka5 Kxh5 –+ or 55 Rc2? Rxa6 56 Rxc8 Kxh5 –+ since the white king is too far away from the black pawn.

55…Kxh5

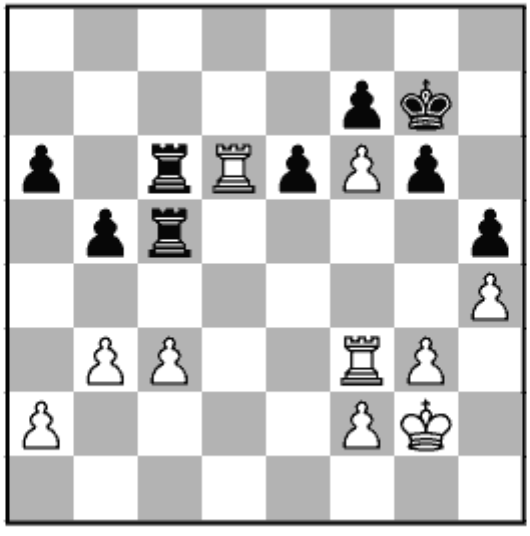
After other moves Black will lose his f7-pawn, with a drawn ending: 55…Kf5 56 Rc2 Na7 57 Rc7 =+; 55…Kh4 56 Rf2 Rxa6 57 Rxf7 =+; 55…Kf3 56 Rc2 =.

56 Rh2+ Kg5 57 Rxh6! Kxh6 58 Kc5

The king is just in time to drive the knight away from c8. It will either be Q vs Q or a repetition with the king constantly

attacking the knight: **58…f5 59 Kc6 f4 60 Kb7 Nd6+ 61 Kc6** =.

back



Solution 269: Black to play

Deviatkin – Divya

Mumbai 2018/19

This isn't an ending where Black can afford to leave his king locked up behind the kingside pawns. He must seek to break out by playing …g5 as soon as possible.

40…Kh6!

Not:

a) 40…Kg8? 41 Rd8+ Kh7 42 Rf8 Rc7 43 Ra8 +–.

b) 40…Kh7? 41 Rd7 Rc7 (41…Kg8 42 Rd8+ transposes to the 40…Kg8? line) 42 Rfd3 +– leaves the black king stuck. Then 42…Kh6 43 Rxc7 Rxc7 44 f4 +– was played in the game.

41 Rd8

41 Rd7 Rc7 42 Rfd3 (42 Re7 g5 =) 42…g5 =.

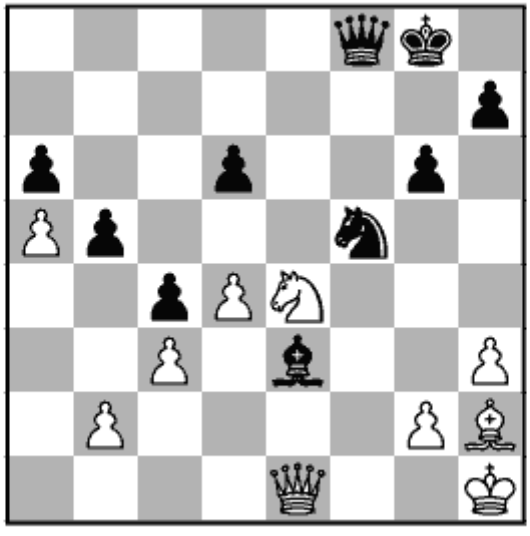
41…Rc8 42 Rfd3 Rxd8

42…g5!?.

43 Rxd8 g5

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 270: Black to play

Peng Shunkai – A.Katz

Burlingame 2019

White is threatening to take the d6-pawn by exploiting the loose bishop on e3, and there is only one way to address that issue.

33…Bh6!

Not:

a) 33…d5? 34 Nc5 +–.

b) 33…Qe7? 34 Nxd6 Nxd6 (34…Bg5 35 Ne4 +– was played in the game) 35 Bxd6 Qxd6 36 Qxe3 +–.

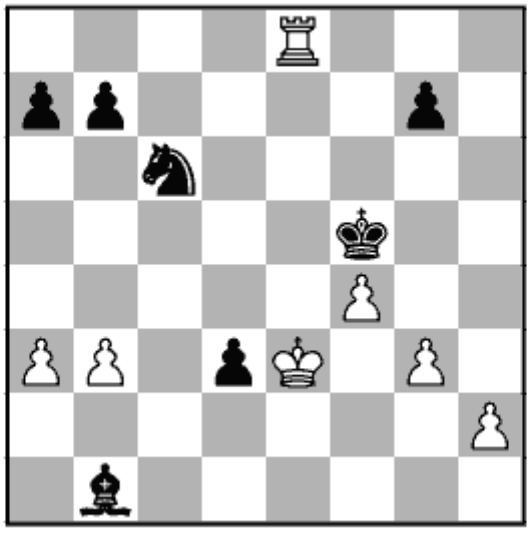
34 g4 d5

Or 34…Nxd4!? 35 cxd4 Qf3+ 36 Kg1 Be3+ 37 Nf2, when both 37…Bxd4 and 37…Qxh3 are unclear.

35 gxf5 dxe4 36 Qxe4 Qxf5

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 271: Black to play

Ameir – Subhayan

Mumbai 2018/19

Black's winning chances are all pinned on his d-pawn.

39…Nd4! 40 Re7

40 b4 Nb3 –+ and 40 Kd2 Nxb3+ 41 Kc3 d2 42 Rd8 Ke4 –+ (as played in the game) are hopeless for White.

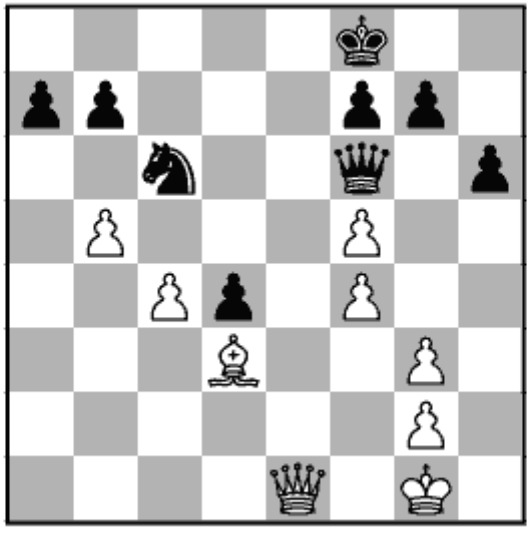
40…Nxb3 41 g4+ Kf6!

After 41…Kxg4? 42 Rxg7+ Kf5 43 Rxb7 d2 44 Rd7 = White draws by giving up his rook for knight and pawn, while 41… Kg6?! 42 Rxb7 Bc2? (Black can still win with 42…d2! 43 Rd7 Kf6!, even though he has wasted a tempo) 43 Rd7 =+ leaves the king too far from the action on g6, explaining why it must head for d5.

42 Rxb7 d2 43 Rd7 Ke6 44 Rd8 Bc2

Black has a decisive advantage: **45 Rxd2 Nxd2 46 Kxd2 Be4 47 Ke3 Kd5 –+**.

back



Solution 272: Black to play

Siva – Thrish

Mumbai 2018/19

38…Qe7!

38…Nb8? loses to 39 Qa5 +–, while after 38…Ne7? (as played in the game) 39 c5! Nxf5 40 Qb4 Kg8 41 c6 +– the strong passed c-pawn gives White a decisive advantage.

39 Qf2

After 39 Qxe7+ Nxe7, with the queens gone Black is fine: 40 Kf2 a5 (40…Ng8!? is also unclear) 41 Kf3 a4 with unclear play.

39…Nb4! 40 Qxd4 Nxd3 41 Qxd3 Kg8

The position is close to equality, as White's extra pawn plays no special role.

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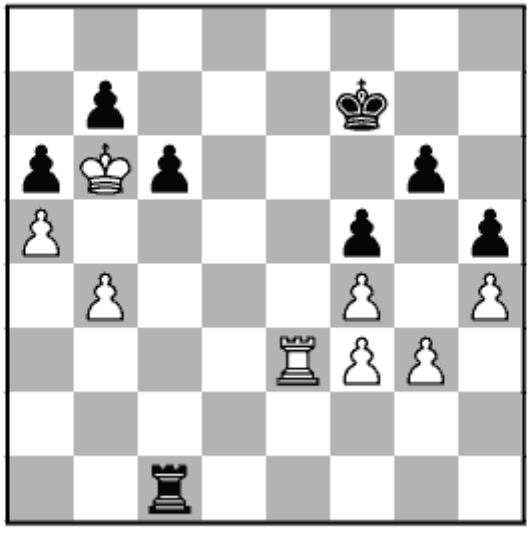

Solution 273: Black to play

Ali Marandi – B.Escalante

Burlingame 2019

39…Rb1! 40 Kxb7 c5!

After 40…Rxb4+? 41 Kxc6 Rb5 42 Re5 Rb3 43 Rc5 +– White will win the a6-pawn and promote this own a-pawn, while Black will be nothing like as fast on the kingside.

41 Kxa6

The game was agreed drawn after 41 Kb6!? in view of 41… Rxb4+ 42 Kxc5 Rb5+ =.

41…Rxb4 =

Black is no worse here since the white king is stranded on the a-file.

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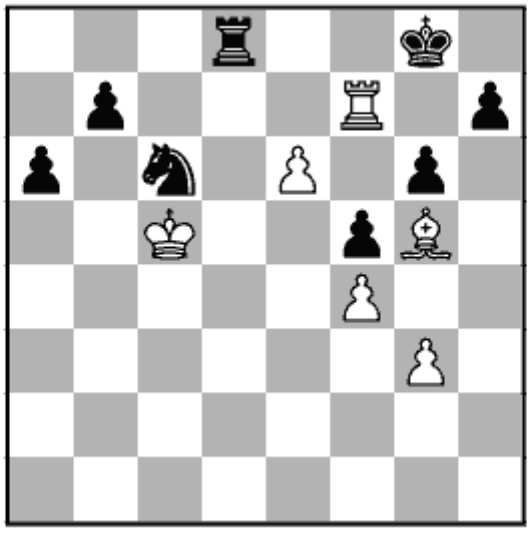

Solution 274: Black to play

Mullon – Mullick

Stockholm 2018/19

With a couple of precise moves, Black can gain enough play against the white king to simplify into a tenable ending.

39…Nd4!

39…Re8? (as played in the game) loses to 40 Kd5! Nd8 (40…a5 41 Bf6 +–) 41 Bxd8 Rxd8+ 42 Rd7 Re8 (42…Rb8 43 e7!? Kf7 44 Rd8 +–) 43 Rxb7 +–.

40 Re7 Nb3+

Now the main problems are behind Black, though White can still pose some challenges. Instead 40…a5? loses to 41 Bf6 +–, while 40…h6? 41 Bxh6! is very unpleasant for Black. The only other move to survive is the surprising 40…b6+?!, when 41 Kxb6 Rd6+ 42 Kc5 Rxe6 43 Kxd4 Rxe7 44 Bxe7 a5! is a drawn ending, as indicated by the engines and their tablebases.

41 Kb4

Or: 41 Kc4 Nd2+ = (or 41…Na5+ =); 41 Kb6 Rd6+ 42 Kc7 Rc6+ = and White can't play 43 Kxb7? because of 43…Rxe6 –+.

41…Nd4 42 Kc4!?

A better try than 42 Rxb7?! Re8 =+ or 42 Kc5 Nb3+ =.

42…Nc6!

Here Black could still go astray: 42…b5+?! 43 Kc5 Nb3+ 44 Kb6 Nd4 45 Kc7 +/– gives White winning chances.

43 Rd7

The point is 43 Rxb7?? Na5+ –+.

43…Rxd7! 44 exd7 Kf7

While White is eliminating Black's queenside pawns, Black will be able to exchange off White's pawns on the other flank. For example: **45 d8Q** (after 45 Kd5 a5 46 d8Q Nxd8 47 Bxd8 a4 White is even in danger of losing unless he starts playing more cautiously) **45…Nxd8 46 Bxd8 Ke6 47 Kc5 b5 48 Bg5 b4 49 Kxb4 Kd5 =**.

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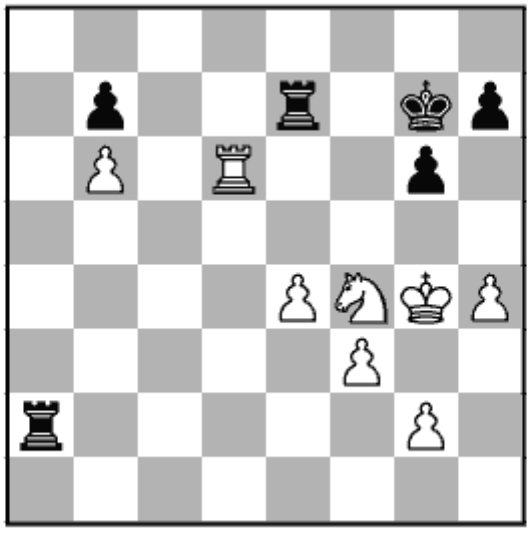

Solution 275: Black to play

Pantzar – Lahav

Stockholm 2018/19

If Black can exchange off the d6-rook, his chances of holding the position will be vastly improved.

61…Rc2!

61…Rf7? 62 Ne6+ Kh6 63 g3 +– occurred in the game.

62 h5

White gains nothing from 62 Ne6+ Kf7!.

62…Rc6!

Not 62…gxh5+? 63 Nxh5+ Kf7 64 Nf4 with a large advantage for White. Then 64…Rc6?! doesn't save Black: 65 Rxc6 bxc6 66 Nd3! Rb7 67 Ne5+ Ke6 68 Nc4 +–.

63 Rd8 Rf7

Threatening to take on b6. With further accurate play, Black is now OK: **64 Kg5** (64 e5 Rc4 65 g3 Re7 =) **64…h6+! 65 Kg4**

g5 66 Nd5 Rf8 and the game should end in a draw.

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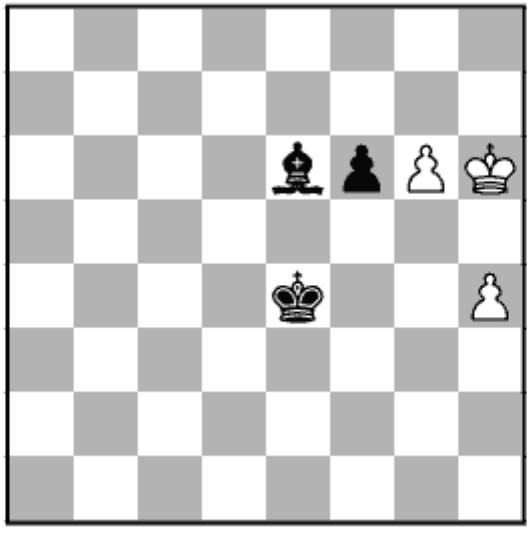


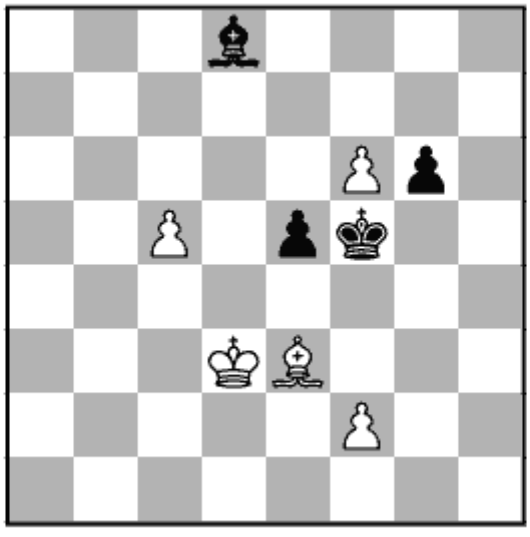
Solution 276: Black to play

Saidy – T.Kung

Burlingame 2019

58…Kf5! (after 58…f5? 59 h5 f4 60 Kg7 f3 the game was agreed drawn since after 61 h6 f2 62 h7 = Black's extra bishop is not of much use; the g6-pawn provides adequate cover for the white king) **59 Kg7** (59 Kh7 Bd7 {not 59…Kg4? 60 Kg7! f5 61 Kf6 Bc4 62 h5 =} 60 g7 Be6 –+) **59…Bd7!** (Black needs to take aim at the g6-pawn) **60 h5** (60 Kf7 Be8+ 61 Kxe8 Kxg6 –+) **60…Be8 61 Kh6 Kg4 62 g7** (62 Kg7 Kg5 –+) **62…Bf7 –+** and it's time for White to resign.

back



Solution 277: Black to play

Elgabry – S.Chowdhury (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

In fact, both moves are good enough to hold the draw, but from a practical viewpoint it makes far more sense to take with the king on f6, as the bishop is doing a good job on d8 holding back the white c-pawn.

45…Kxf6!?

45…Bxf6?! 46 Kc4 Ke6 47 c6 and now if the bishop returns to d8, Black has lost a tempo compared to the 45…Kxf6!? line. Then 47…Bd8? 48 Kb5 +– and 47…Kd6? 48 Kb5 Kc7 (48…Bd8 49 Bc5+! Ke6 50 Bb6 +–) 49 f3 Kc8 50 Kc5 +– both lose, but 47…e4! draws; e.g., 48 Kb5 Be5 49 Kb6 Kf5 50 Kb7!? (50 c7 Bxc7+ 51 Kxc7 Kg4 52 Kd6 Kf3 and …g5-g4-g3 =, eliminating White's last pawn) 50…g5 51 Bd4 Bf4 52 Ba7 Kg4! (the only way; not 52…g4? 53 Bb8 +–) 53 Bb8 Kf3 54 Bxf4 gxf4 55 c7 Kxf2! 56 c8Q e3! =.

46 Kc4

46 c6 Ke6 47 Kc4 transposes to the main line.

46…Ke6

46…e4 47 Kd5 Kf5 48 c6 Ba5! is more complex.

47 c6 e4!?

Black can also save his skin by 47…Kd6 48 Kb5 Bc7! 49 Bb6 Bb8 =.

48 Kb5

Or 48 Bf4 Kf5! 49 c7 (49 Bb8 Kg4 =) 49…Bxc7 50 Bxc7 Kg4 =.

48…g5! 49 Bb6 Be7 50 Ka6 Bd6 51 c7

51 Kb7 g4 =.

51…Bxc7 52 Bxc7

Now one way to draw is 52…e3 53 fxe3 Kd5 =, when the white king is too far away to protect the e3-pawn.

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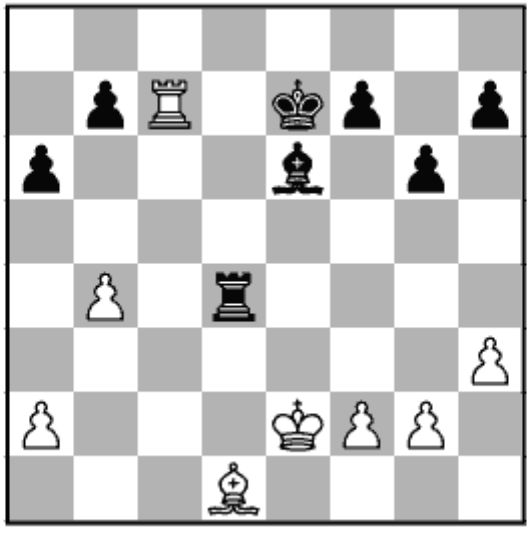


Solution 278: Black to play

F.Bruno – Kravtsiv

Livigno 2012

Yes, with accurate play Black can win a pawn.

34…Kd8!

After 34…Kd6?! 35 Rxb7 Kc6 (as played in the game; 35…Bxa2 36 Ke1 =) 36 Re7 the position is more or less equal: 36…Bxa2 (36…Rxb4 37 Bb3 =) 37 Ba4+ Kb6 38 Be8 =.

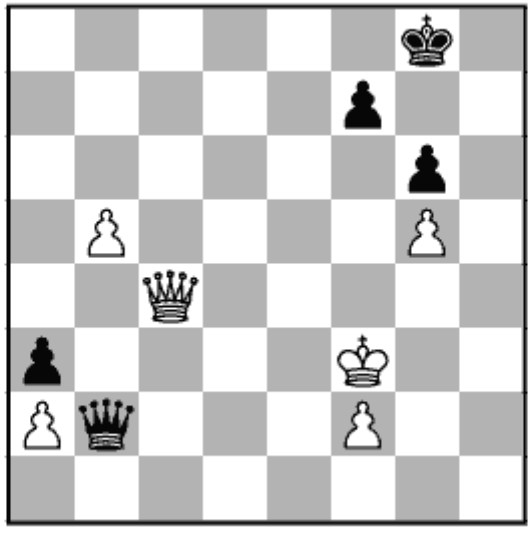
35 Rxb7 Kc8 36 Re7

Or: 36 Ra7 Kb8 37 Re7 Bxa2 –/+; 36 Rb6 Kc7 –+ and White is forced to take the bishop on e6.

36…Bxa2 37 Bc2 Rxb4 –/+

with an extra pawn and chances to win.

back



Solution 279: Black to play

Deviatkin – Tran Minh

Mumbai 2018/19

The main thing is not to let the white king hide behind the b-pawn.

70…Qe5!

70…Qb1? 71 Ke3 Qe1+ 72 Kd4 Qxf2+ 73 Kd5 +– was played in the game.

71 b6

Or: 71 Qc8+ Kg7 =; 71 Qc6 Qf5+ 72 Ke2 Qe5+ 73 Kd3 Qb2! 74 Qd5 Qxf2 =.

71…Qf5+ 72 Ke2

Other lines:

a) 72 Ke3 Qe5+! (72…Qxg5+? 73 Kd4 +–) 73 Kd3 Qd6+ 74 Qd4 Qe6 (now White can't advance his pawn because of the check on a6; 74…Qc6!? = is also good enough) 75 Qd8+ Kh7 =.

b) 72 Kg2 Qxg5+ 73 Kf1 Qh5 74 Qc8+ (74 b7? Qh1+ –/+) 74…Kg7 75 b7 Qd1+ = and Black will keep checking the white king.

72…Qb1!

72…Qe5+? 73 Kf1 +–.

73 Qb3

73 Qc8+ Kg7 74 b7 Qxa2+ =.

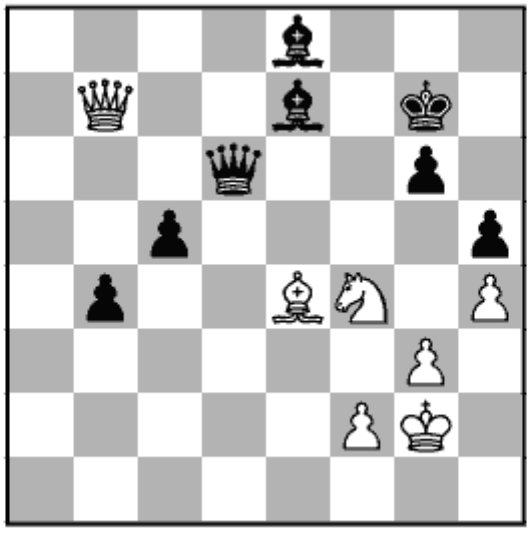
73…Qe4+

73…Qxb3?! is a poor practical decision even though the queen ending after 74 axb3 a2 75 b7 += should be drawn with accurate defence.

74 Kd1 Qd4+ 75 Kc1 Qc5+ =

The king can't escape the checks.

back



Solution 280: White to play

Tryggestad – J.Salomon

Stockholm 2018/19

If the light-squared bishops are exchanged, then the g6-pawn will be a significant weakness.

51 Bd5!

51 Nd5? loses to 51…Bc6 –+, while in the game White went astray with 51 f3?, when Black could have played 51…Bf7!? 52 Bd5 c4 –+.

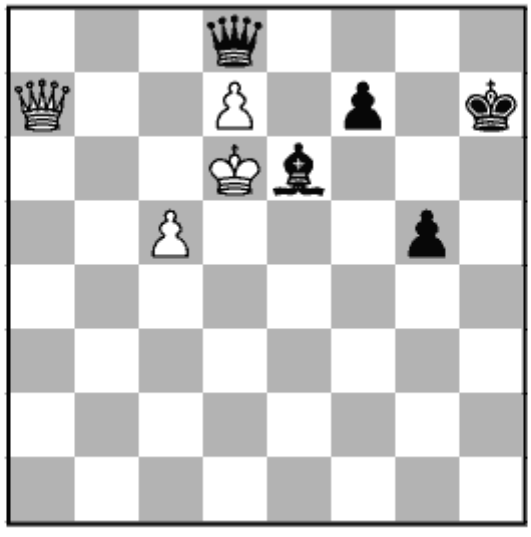
51…Bf7

After 51…Bd7 52 Qa8 Qf6 53 Qb7 Bf5 54 Be4 or 51…Qd7 52 Qa6 Bf6 53 Ne6+ Kh6 54 Qd3 White has sufficient compensation.

52 Bxf7! Kxf7 53 Qe4

White has enough play for the pawn. The dark-squared bishop can't help the pawns advance, while the black queen is tied to the defence of g6. The game is roughly equal.

back



Solution 281: Black to play

V.Larsson – Sandu

Stockholm 2018/19

The position of Black's queen needs to be improved.

57…Qf6!

Not:

a) 57…g4? 58 c6 g3 59 Qe3 =.

b) 57…Qf8+? 58 Kc7 Bxd7 (58…Qe7 59 c6 =) 59 Kxd7 =.

c) After 57…Bxd7? 58 Qxd7 Qxd7+ 59 Kxd7 the game ended in a draw.

58 c6

58 Kc7 Qe5+ 59 Kd8 g4 –+.

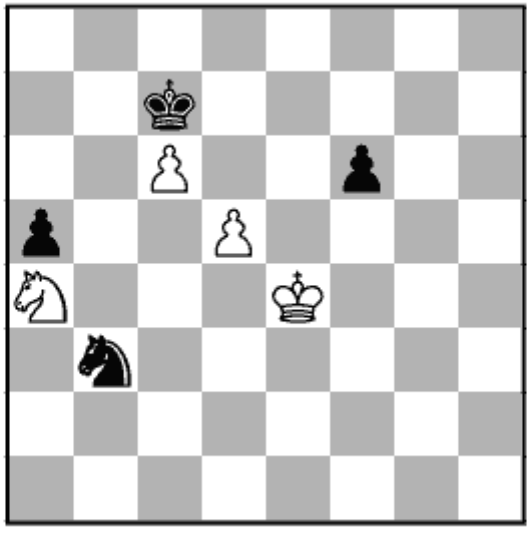
58…Qf4+! 59 Ke7 Qb4+ 60 Kd8

Or: 60 Ke8 Kg8 –+; 60 Kf6 Qd6 –+.

60…Qd6 –+

Black has halted the white pawns, and an exchange of queens comes too slowly to help. For example: **61 Qb7 g4 62 Kc8 g3 63 Qc7** (63 Qb1+ f5 –+) **63…Qxc7+ 64 Kxc7 g2** with an extra piece and an easy win.

back



Solution 282: Black to play

Thapa – Thrish

Mumbai 2018/19

White wants to put his knight on b5, while Black needs to bring his own knight back into the defence as quickly as possible.

68…f5+!

Not:

a) 68…Kd6? exposes the king to a check from b5: 69 Nc3 f5+ 70 Kd3 a4 71 Nb5+ +–.

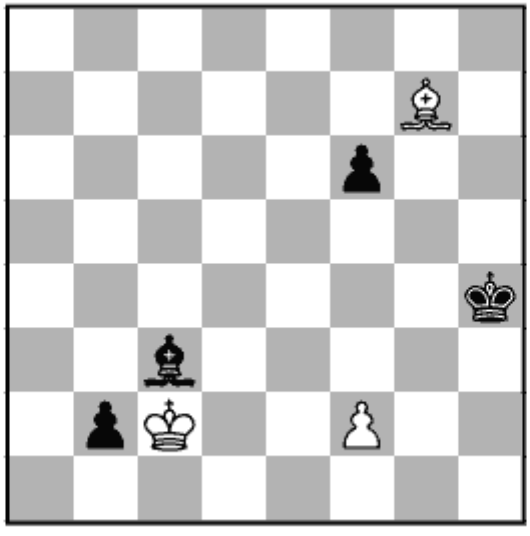
b) 68…Nd2+? puts the knight too far away from the c6-pawn: 69 Kd4 Kd6 (69…Nb3+ 70 Kc3 Nc1 71 Kc4 +–) 70 Nc3 Nf3+ 71 Ke4 Nd2+ 72 Kd3 Nf3 73 Nb5+ +–.

69 Ke5 Nd2!

After 69…f4? (as played in the game) White wrongly agreed to a draw since 70 Nc3 leaves his pawns a step ahead in the race to promote: 70…f3 71 Nb5+ Kb6 72 c7 Kb7 73 d6 Nc5 (73…f2 74 d7 +–) 74 Na7! +–.

Now after **70 Kxf5** (70 Kd4 Ne4 =; 70 d6+!? Kxc6 71 Ke6 Nf3 72 d7 Nd4+! 73 Ke7 Kb5! and Black stops the pawn thanks to the possible fork with …Nc6+) **70…Kd6** (70…Nc4? 71 Ke6 +–) **71 Nc3 Nc4** the knight succeeds in reaching b6 and Black is OK: **72 Ke4 Nb6 73 Kd4** (73 Nb5+ Kc5 =) **73… Nxd5 74 Nxd5 Kxc6 =**.

back



Solution 283: White to play

Nikhil – Konguvel (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

If Black manages to advance his pawn to f3, then he will win. This can only be prevented by White pushing his own f-pawn.

44 f4!

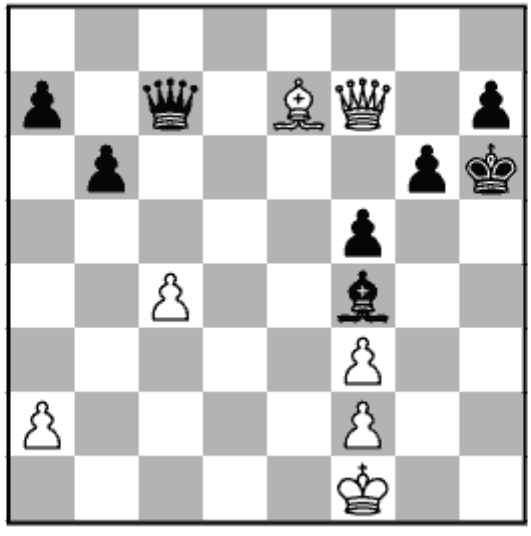
44 Bh6? Kh5! 45 Be3 Kg4 –+ denies White time to advance his f-pawn, while after 44 Bf8? Kg4 45 Bc5 Kf3 46 Be3 f5 47 Bb6 Be5 –+ Black wins easily; e.g., 48 Ba7 f4 49 Bb6 Ke2 50 Ba7 f3 51 Bb6 Bf6 52 Ba7 Bh4 –+.

44…Kg4 45 Bh6

White holds the position despite his bishop being nailed down on h6.

45…Bd4 46 Kb1 Kf3 47 Kc2 Ke4 48 Kb1 =

back



Solution 284: Black to play

Babikov – Gueci

Stockholm 2018/19

Black shouldn't give White time to bring his king to h3.

40…Kh5!

Not:

a) 40…Qe5? 41 Bf8+ Kg5 42 Qxh7 +–.

b) 40…a6? 41 Kg2 b5 (41…Kh5 42 Qf6 Kh6 43 Kh3 +–) 42 Qf8+ Kh5 43 Qf6 Kh6 44 Kh3 bxc4 45 Bf8+ Kh5 46 Qh4#.

c) 40…Be5? 41 Kg2 Bf4 (41…Qc6 42 Bf8+ Kg5 43 Qxh7 +–) 42 Qf8+ Kh5 43 Qf6 Kh6 44 Kh3 +– (as played in the game) gives White a mating attack.

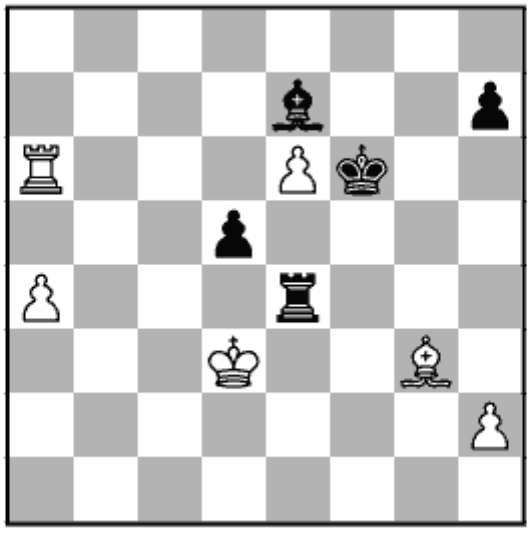
41 Qxh7+

41 Qf6?! doesn't work when the king is on f1: 41…Qxc4+ 42 Kg2 Bc1 =+.

41…Bh6 42 Kg2 Qxc4 43 Bf8 Qf4 =

with an equal position.

back



Solution 285: Black to play

Kravtsiv – Batchuluun

Kazan tt 2013

It's essential to evaluate the pawn ending correctly. My opponent did so, and rightly chose…

42…Rxe6

Now I opted for the bishop ending, and the game was later drawn. But let's see why the pawn ending also offers nothing:

43 Bh4+ Kf5 44 Rxe6 Kxe6 45 Bxe7 Kxe7 46 Kd4 Kd6!

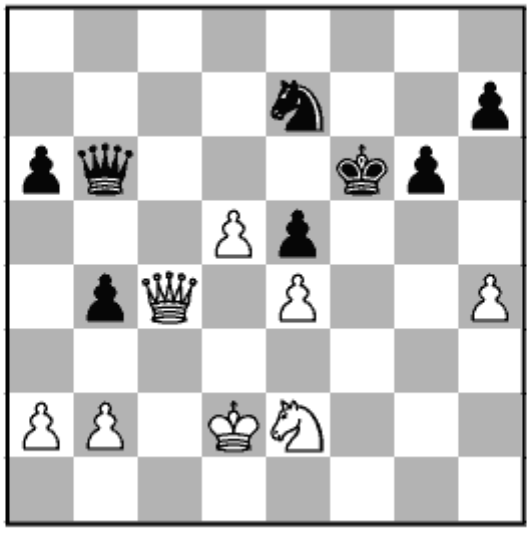
Not 46…Ke6? 47 Kc5 +–.

47 h4 h5!

The only move to draw. This ensures that the black king will make it safely back to f8 in time after both kings have gone pawn-chasing. Black loses after 47…Kc6? 48 h5 +–.

48 a5 Kc6 49 a6 Kb6 50 Kxd5 Kxa6 51 Ke5 Kb6 52 Kf6 Kc6 53 Kg6 Kd7 54 Kxh5 Ke8 55 Kg6 Kf8 =

back



Solution 286: White to play

Tarun – Kurbonboeva (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

Your main choice was between transferring the king to b3 and reactivating the knight.

32 Nc1!

32 Qb3?! Kg7 gives White a much smaller advantage, while after 32 Kc2?! g5 33 hxg5+ Kxg5 Black holds the position thanks to the outside passed h-pawn: 34 Kb3 (34 Qd3!? Ng6 +=) 34…h5 35 Qxb4 Nc8! is unclear.

32…Qf2+

Here 32…g5 is well met by 33 hxg5+ Kxg5 34 Nd3 +–.

33 Kd1!

Not 33 Qe2? Qxe2+ 34 Kxe2 Nc8 =.

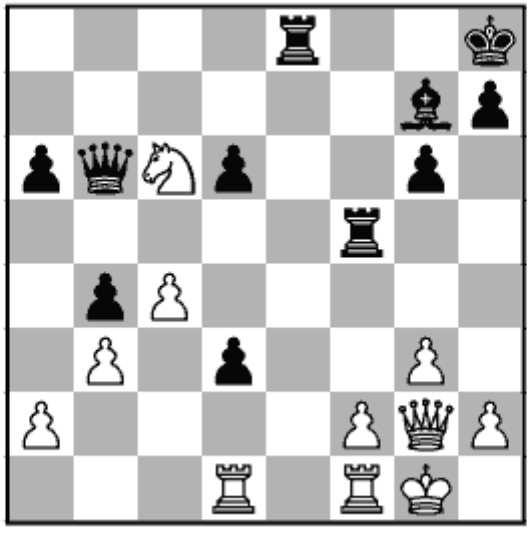
Now Black loses quickly; for example: **33…Qd4+** (33…Qf3+ 34 Kc2 +–; 33…Qxh4 34 Qxa6+ Kg5 35 Qd6 +–; 33…Qxb2

34 d6 +–) **34 Qxd4 exd4 35 Ke2** and the connected passed pawns in the centre are too strong: **35…Ke5 36 Kf3** +–.

back

6: Tough Nuts

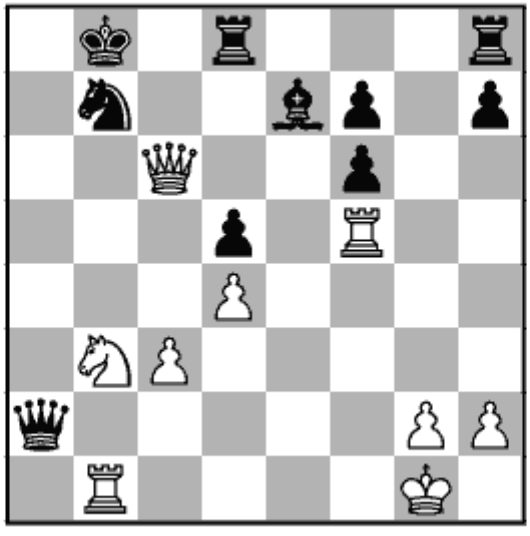
Here we come to some of our most difficult puzzles: these 45 positions are all level 4 or level 5 (including the level 5 endgame exercises held over from the previous chapter). Even if you can't solve a position, think seriously about each one and try to make a decision (as you would have to at the board) before looking at the solution. Always make sure you understand the solution and what, if anything, you missed.



Puzzle 287: Black to play

Black has a way to win, but the best moves are not so easy to find.

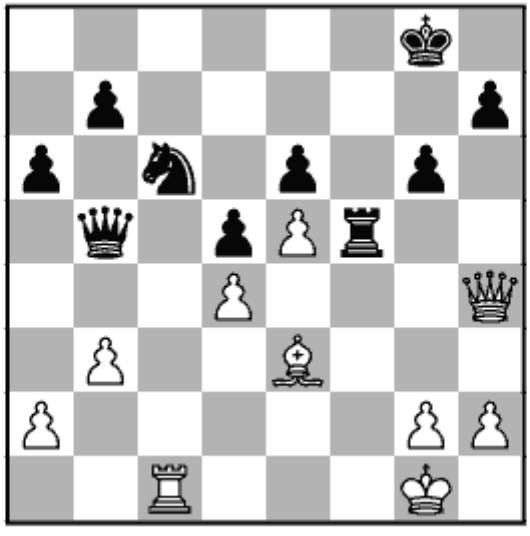
answer



Puzzle 288: White to play

Find the best way to continue the attack.

answer



Puzzle 289: White to play

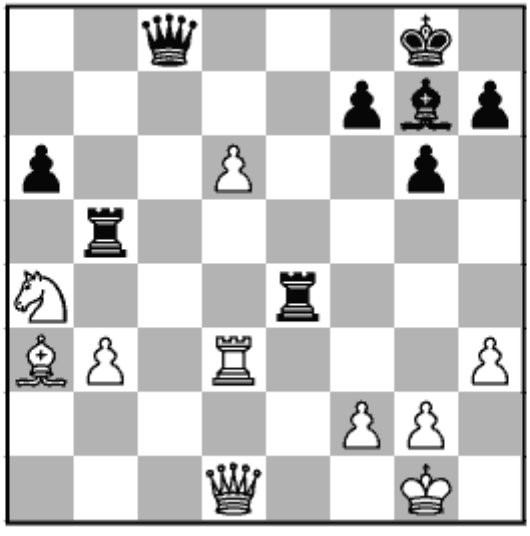
Evaluate the position and find the best move.

answer

Puzzle 290: White to play

How does White continue his attack?

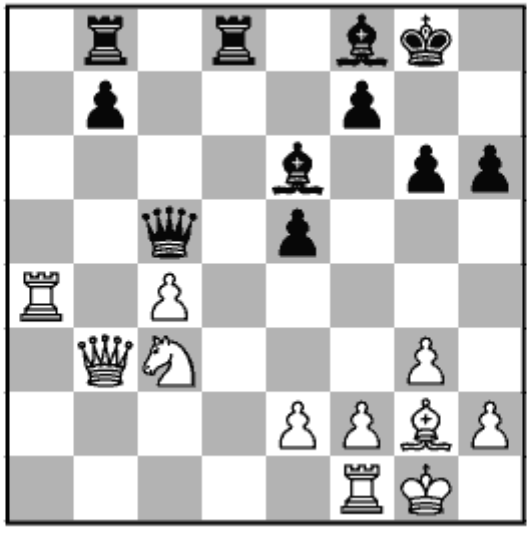
answer



Puzzle 291: Black to play

In the game Black made a mistake here and lost. And he could have been much better…

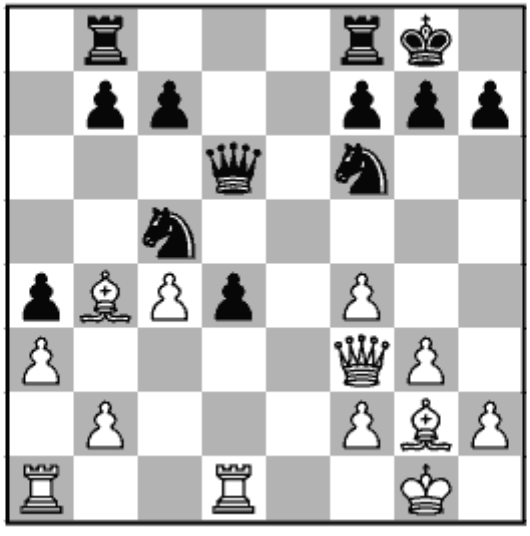
answer



Puzzle 292: Black to play

How can Black gain a big advantage?

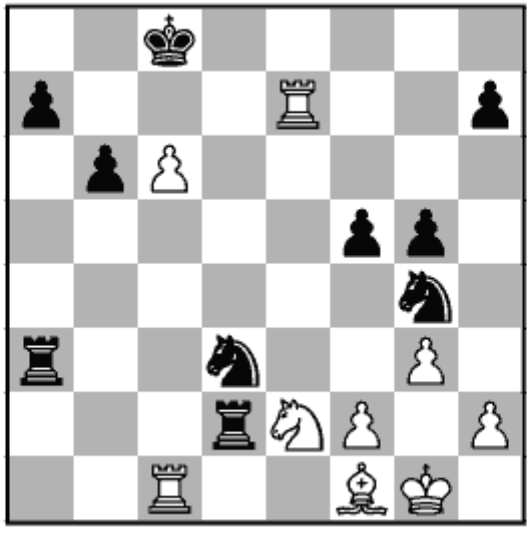
answer



Puzzle 293: White to play

In the game White missed a chance for a big advantage here. What should he have played?

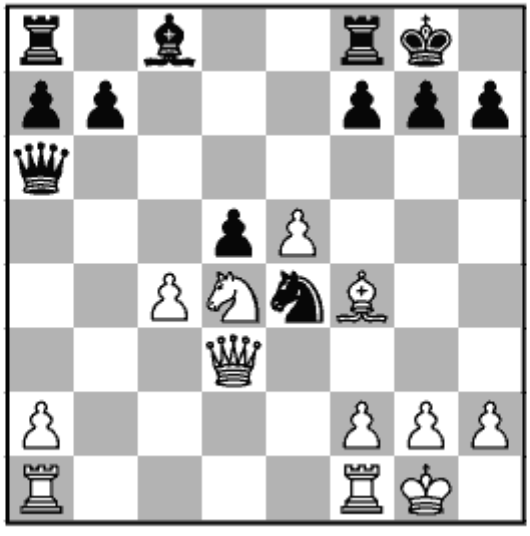
answer



Puzzle 294: White to play

The game soon ended in perpetual check. Show how White could have done better.

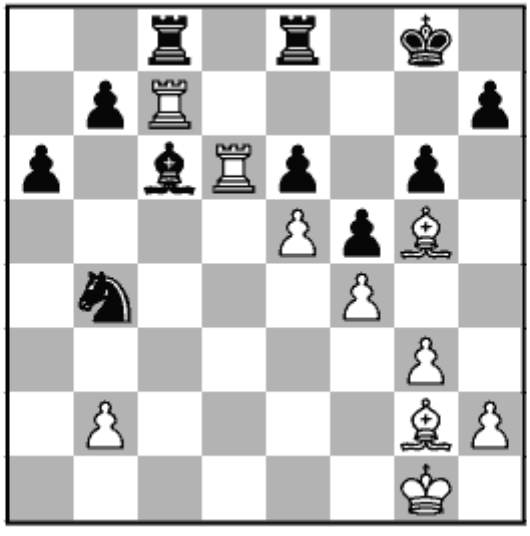
answer



Puzzle 295: White to play

White convincingly won the game. What did he play?

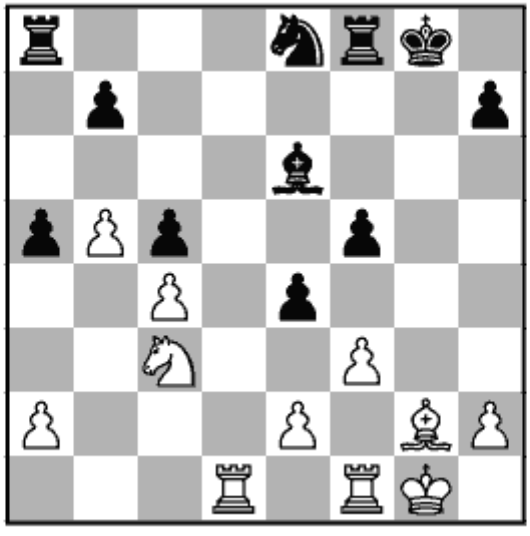
answer



Puzzle 296: White to play

The game ended in a draw. Can White do better?

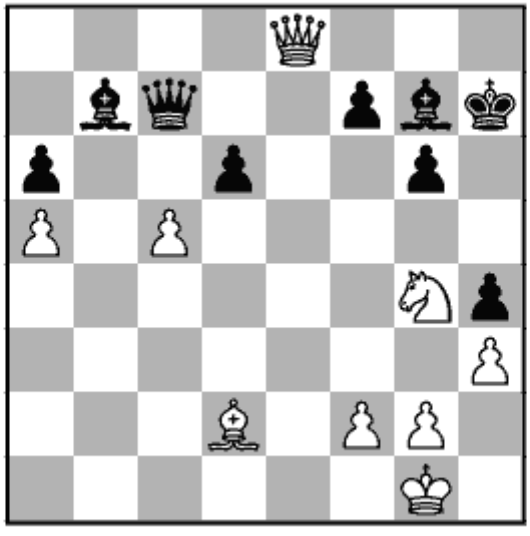
answer



Puzzle 297: Black to play

Black has problems due to his passive pieces. How should he defend?

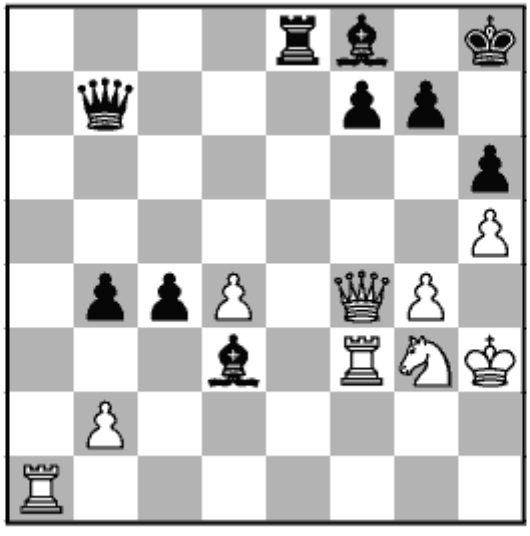
answer



Puzzle 298: Black to play

White is hoping to attack the king. Whether he can do so hinges on Black's next two moves.

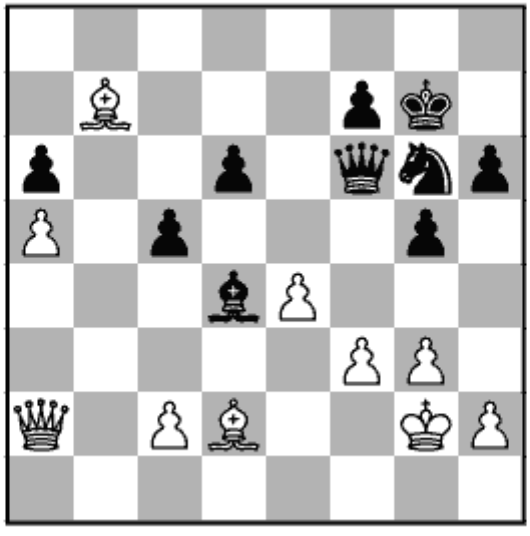
answer



Puzzle 299: Black to play

Black has a pleasant-looking position, but to squeeze the most out of it he must play accurately.

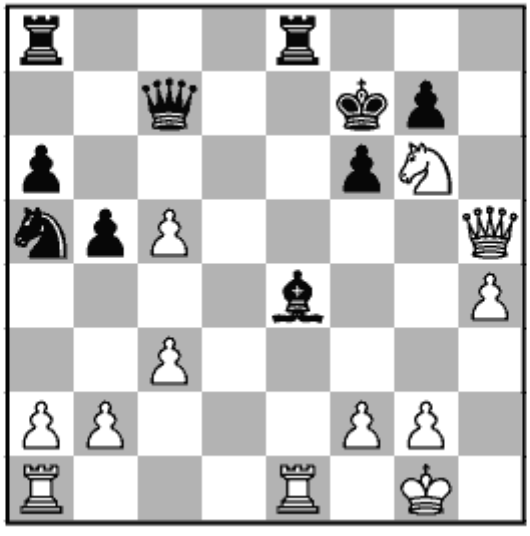
answer



Puzzle 300: Black to play

Black’s next move in the game allowed White to escape with a draw. Find something better.

answer



Puzzle 301: White to play

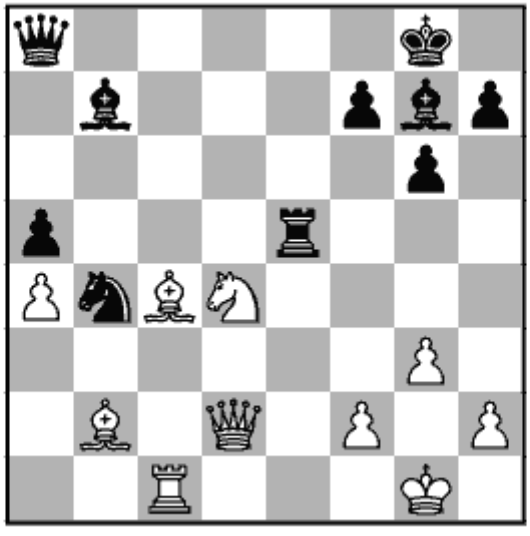
White has a dangerous attack, but can he convert it into a material advantage?

answer

Puzzle 302: Black to play

Carefully calculate the options to rule out any chance of White saving himself.

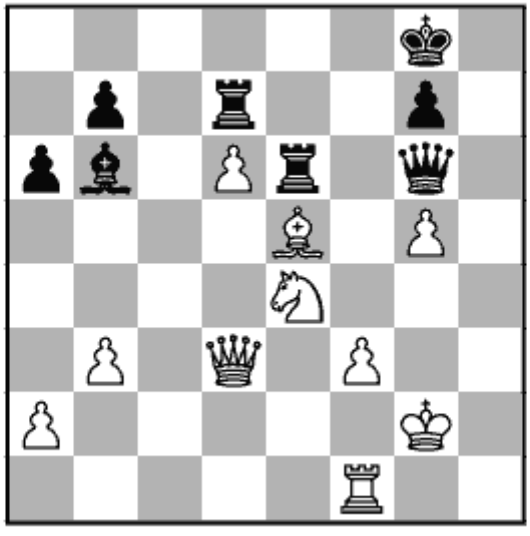
answer



Puzzle 303: Black to play

Black needs to be cautious, as White's threats are easily underestimated.

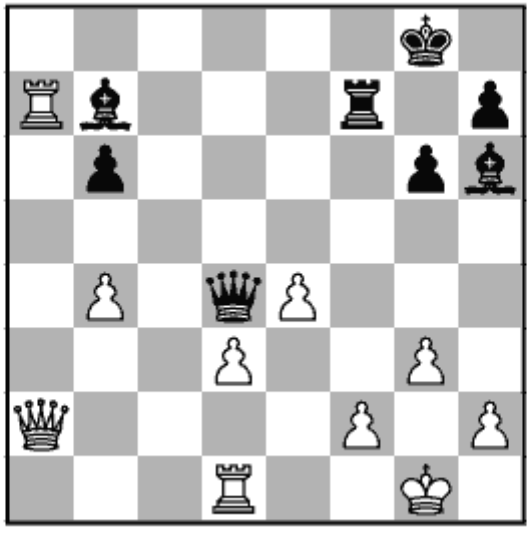
answer



Puzzle 304: Black to play

White has just taken a pawn on e5. What should Black do?

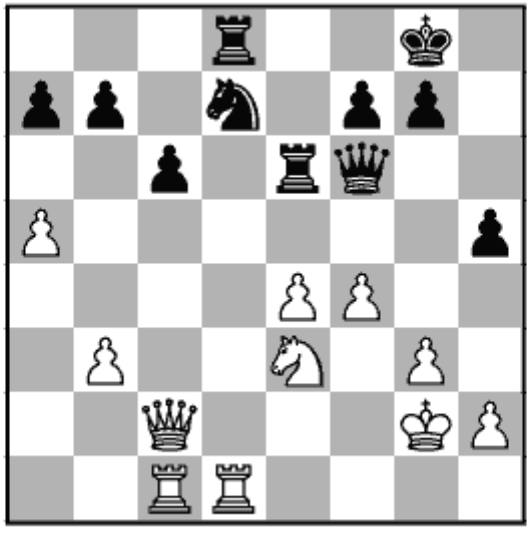
answer



Puzzle 305: Black to play

Black appears to have problems. Can he hold the position?

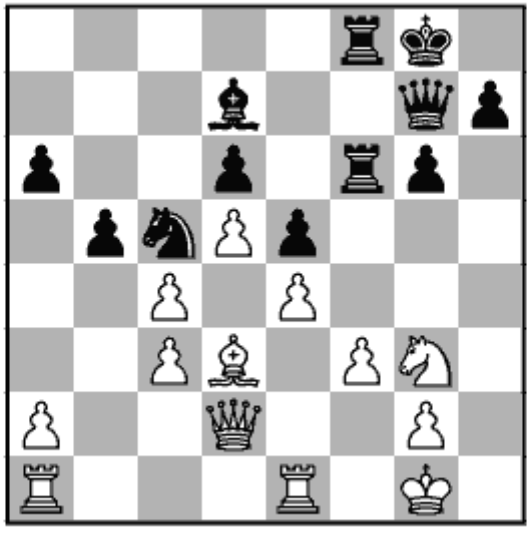
answer



Puzzle 306: Black to play

Black's position looks unpleasant. Does he have a way to solve his problems?

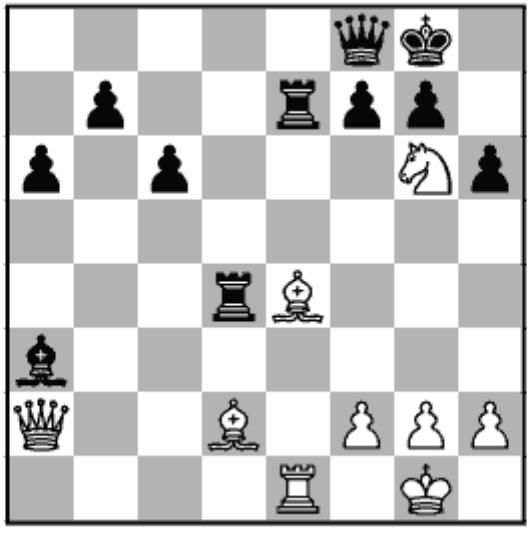
answer



Puzzle 307: Black to play

How can Black develop his initiative?

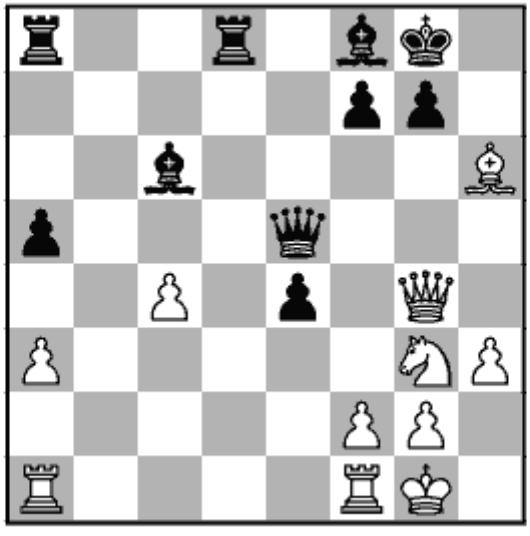
answer



Puzzle 308: Black to play

White has just played 25 Ne5-g6. How should Black react?

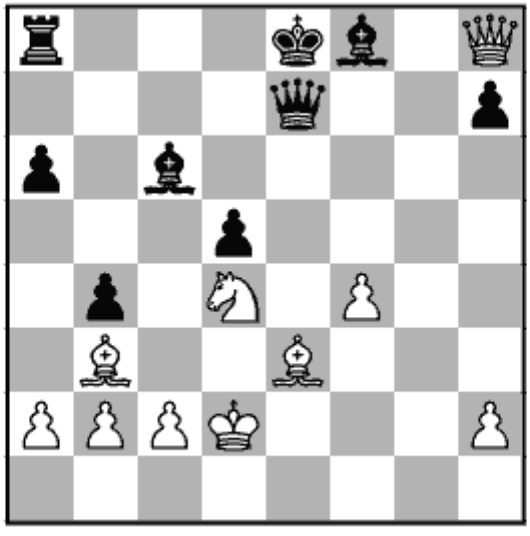
answer



Puzzle 309: Black to play

Black can easily keep a small plus here, but you should be hunting much bigger game than that!

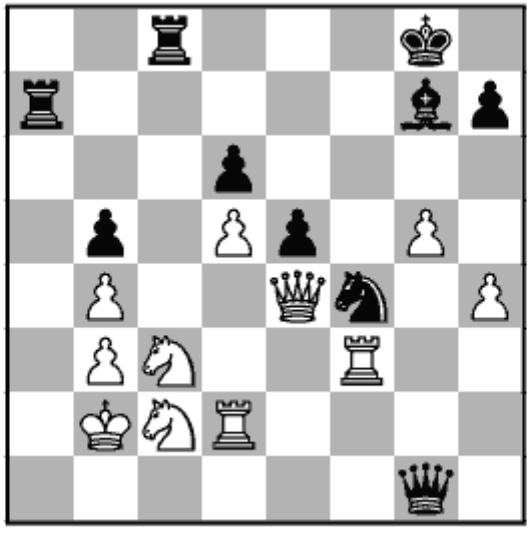
answer



Puzzle 310: Black to play

Black can’t castle any more. How does he defend himself?

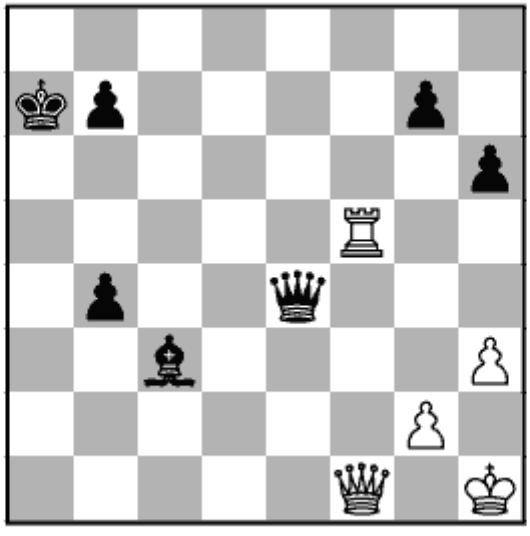
answer



Puzzle 311: White to play

Should White take the knight on f4?

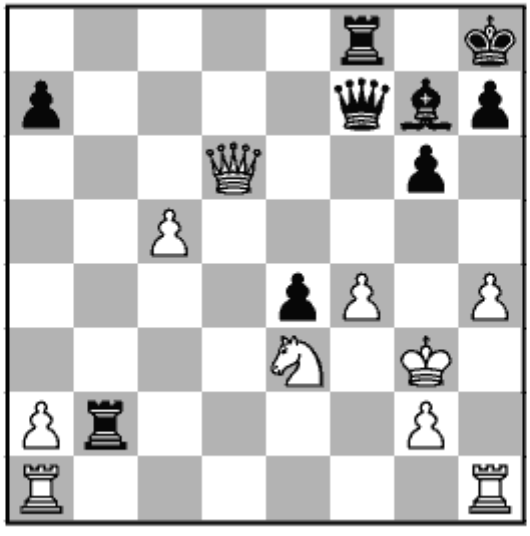
answer



Puzzle 312: White to play

White is attacking, but must continue accurately to win.

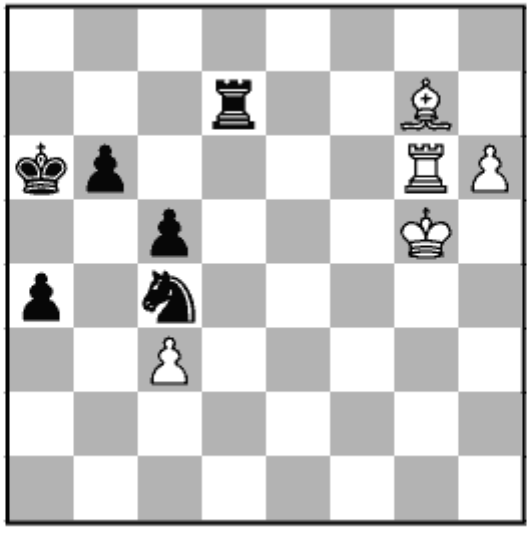
answer



Puzzle 313: Black to play

Black has a beautiful path to victory. Can you find it?

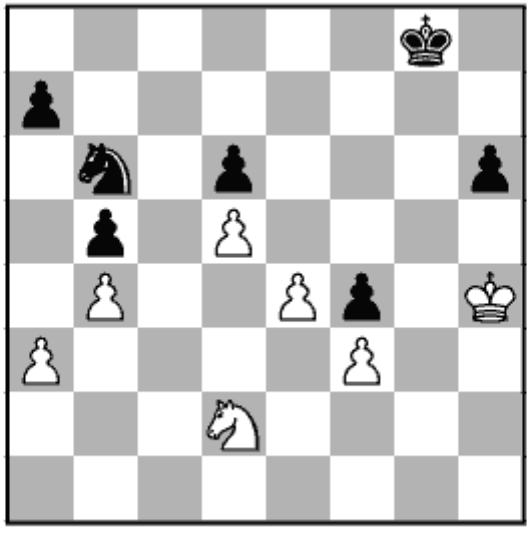
answer



Puzzle 314: White to play

Bear in mind that even if he has to give up his rook for the h-pawn, Black may be able to hang on thanks to his passed a-pawn.

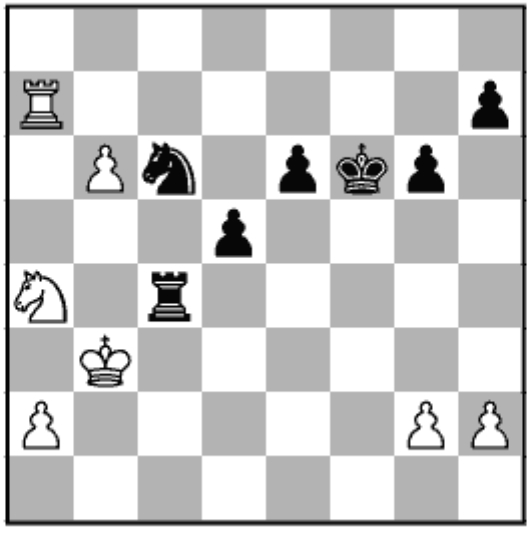
answer



Puzzle 315: White to play

To keep winning chances, White needs the right plan and to implement it precisely.

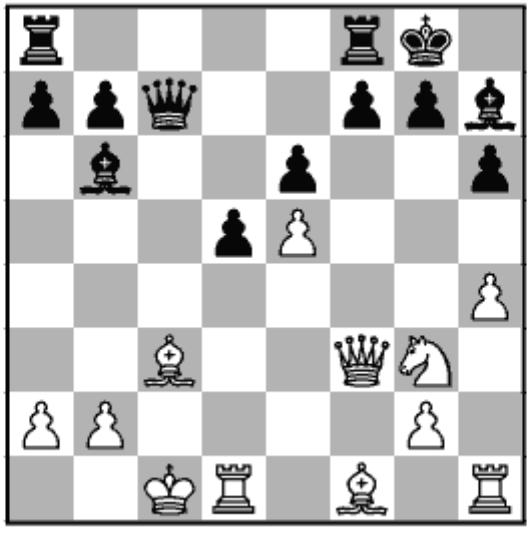
answer



Puzzle 316: White to play

White has a strong pawn on b6, but it is not so easy to make use of it.

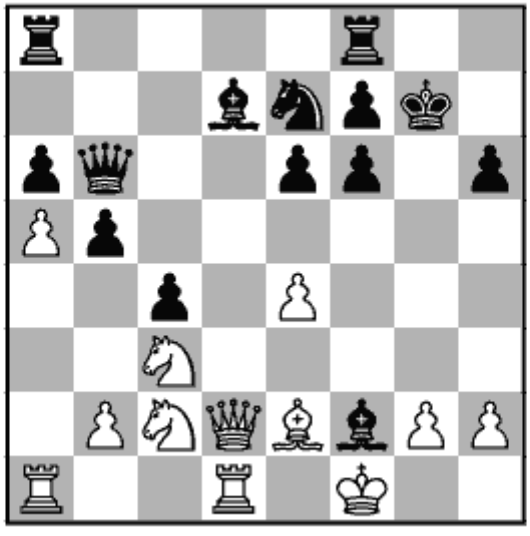
answer



Puzzle 317: White to play

White has played the opening carelessly. How does he now avoid serious trouble?

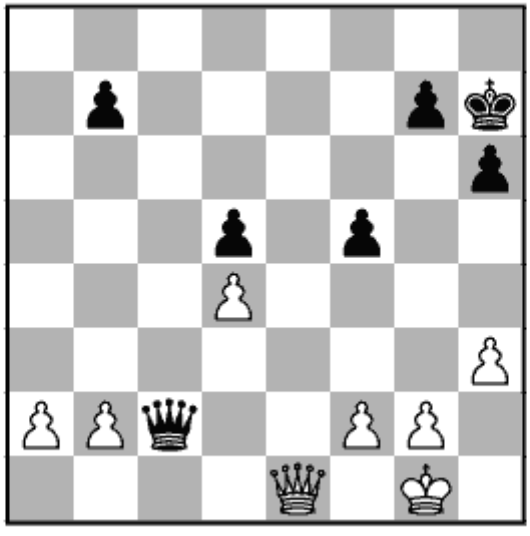
answer



Puzzle 318: Black to play

Several pieces are under attack. Can Black escape?

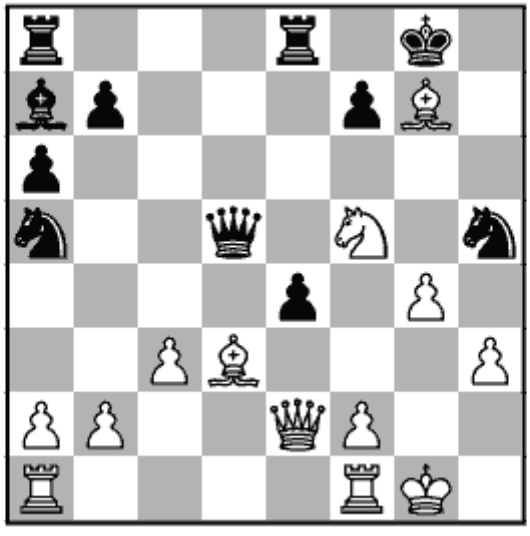
answer



Puzzle 319: White to play

White is a pawn up, but very precise play is needed if he is to preserve chances of victory.

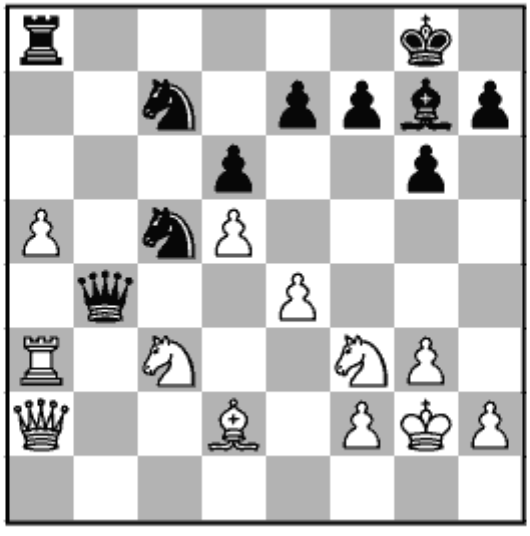
answer



Puzzle 320: White to play

With White two pawns up, you shouldn't settle for a small advantage.

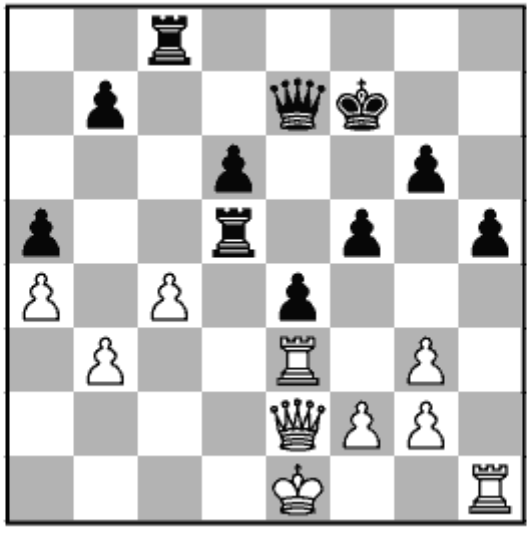
answer



Puzzle 321: White to play

How should White develop an initiative?

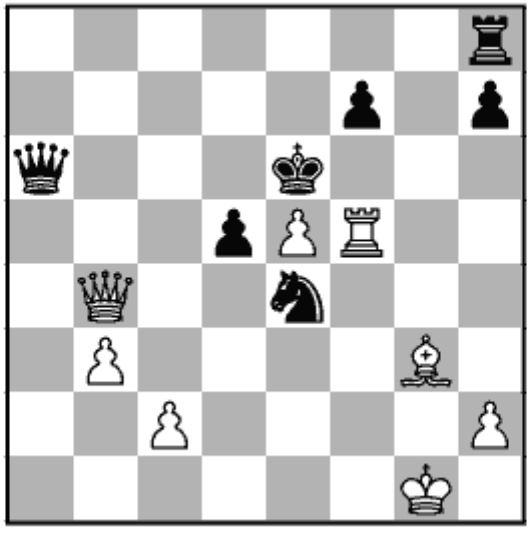
answer



Puzzle 322: White to play

White is a pawn down. Does he have a way to improve his position? (It is still legal for White to castle.)

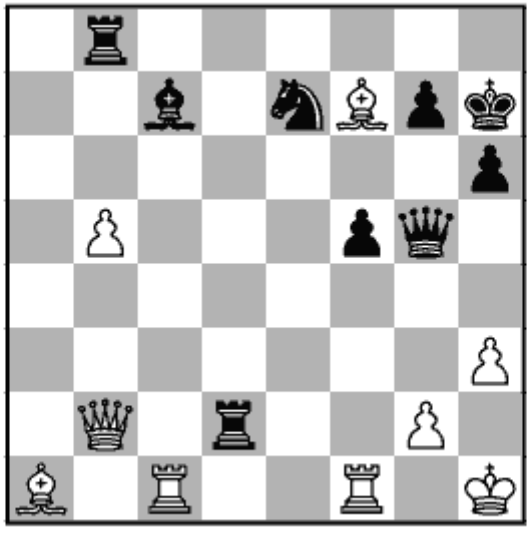
answer



Puzzle 323: White to play

It seems the rook needs to move away. But to where?

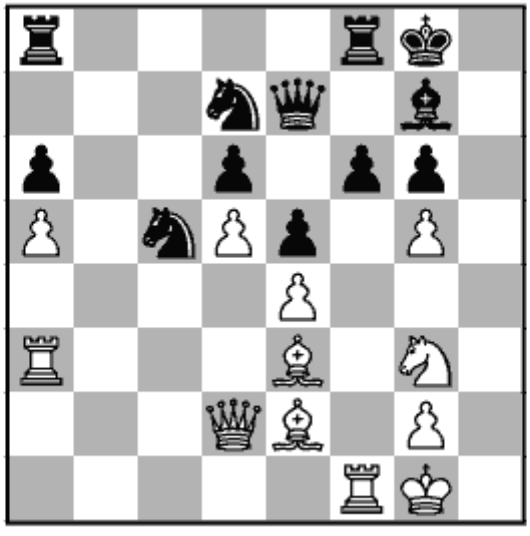
answer



Puzzle 324: White to play

Carefully calculate the options and assess the position.

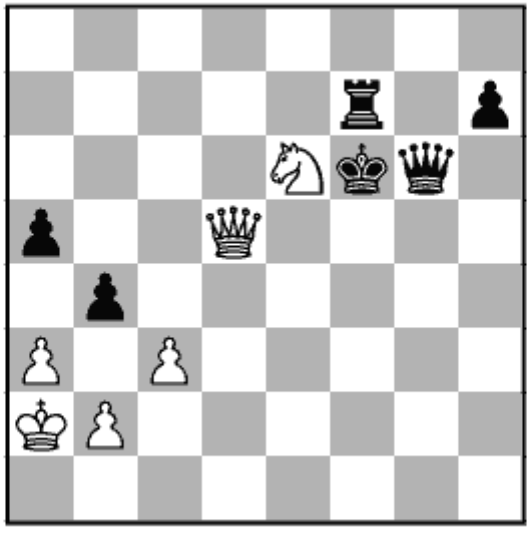
answer



Puzzle 325: White to play

White obviously has some advantage. Your task is to squeeze the most out of the position that you can.

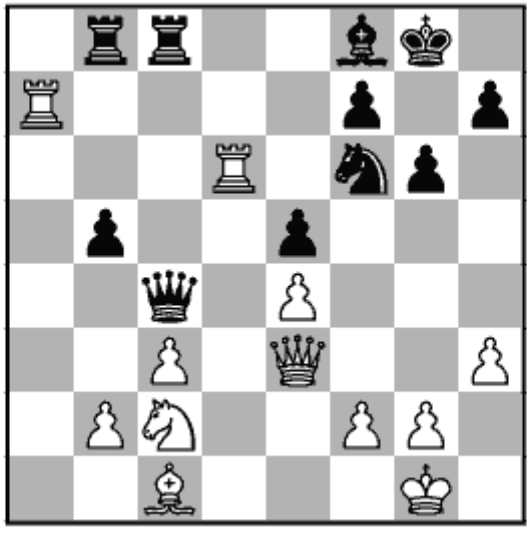
answer



Puzzle 326: White to play

White has a way to survive, but it is very far from simple.

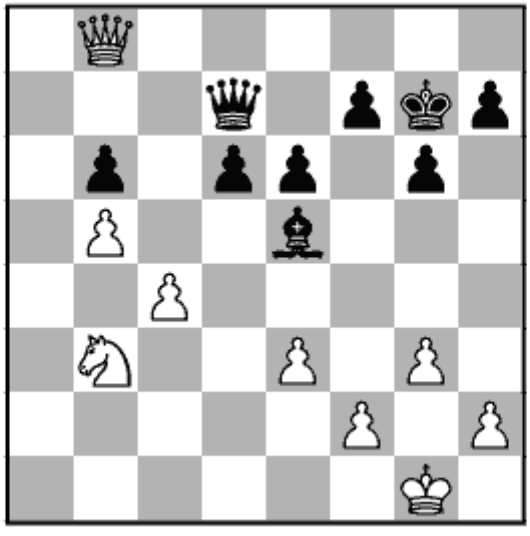
answer



Puzzle 327: White to play

With the right moves White can win, so finding a small advantage is not enough.

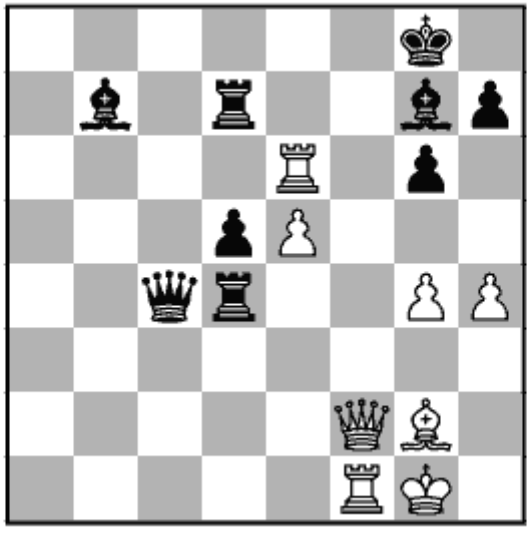
answer



Puzzle 328: Black to play

Black’s position looks hopeless, but he can be saved.

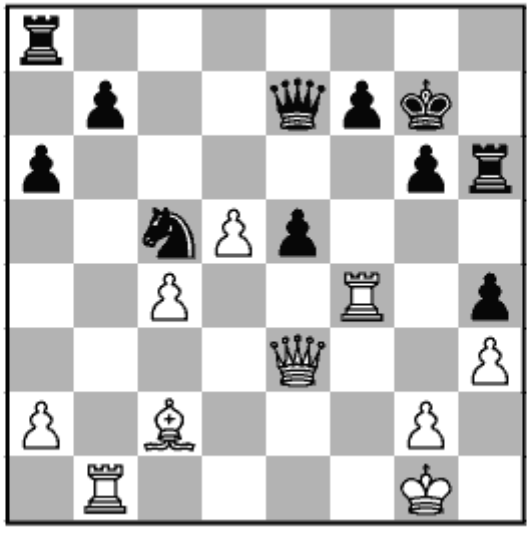
answer



Puzzle 329: Black to play

Black is a piece up. Can he parry the threats and win?

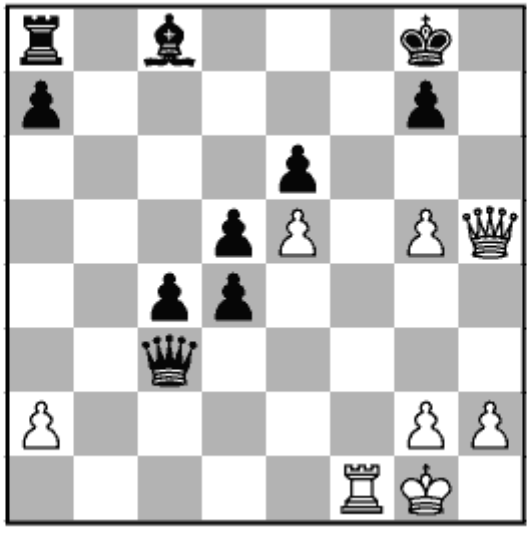
answer



Puzzle 330: White to play

White has a promising position. How should he continue the attack?

answer

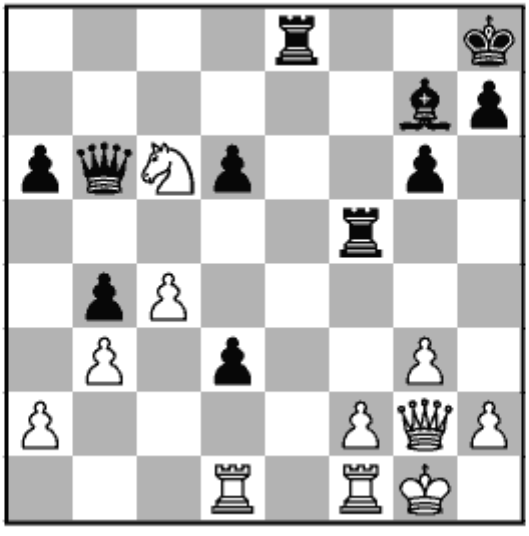


Puzzle 331: White to play

It is easy for White to give perpetual check, but how can he achieve more than that?

answer

Solutions for Chapter 6



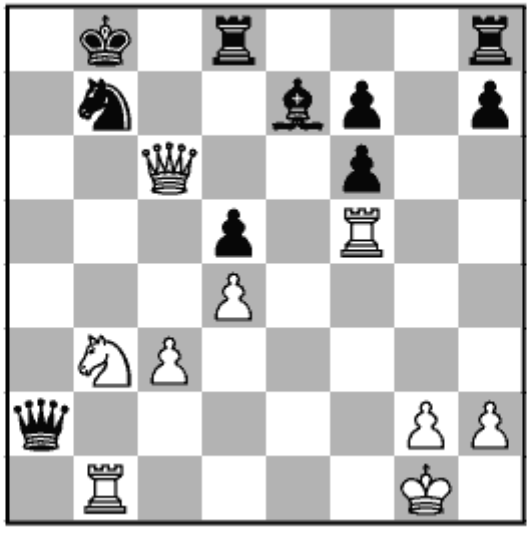
Solution 287: Black to play

Sapale – F.Polyakov

Stockholm 2018/19

A couple of precise moves make everything clear: **27…Re2!** (in the game, 27…Rc5? 28 Ne7! allowed White a large advantage, while 27…Bd4? 28 Rxd3 {28 Nxd4? Qxd4 –+} 28…Rxf2 {28…Bxf2+ 29 Kh1 =} 29 Qd5! is unclear) **28 Rxd3** (White has little choice, as letting Black advance the d-pawn would also be fatal: 28 h3 d2 –+; 28 g4 Rf8 –+) **28… Rfxf2! 29 Rxf2 Re1+ 30 Qf1 Rxf1+ 31 Kxf1 Qxc6 –+** with an easy win.

back



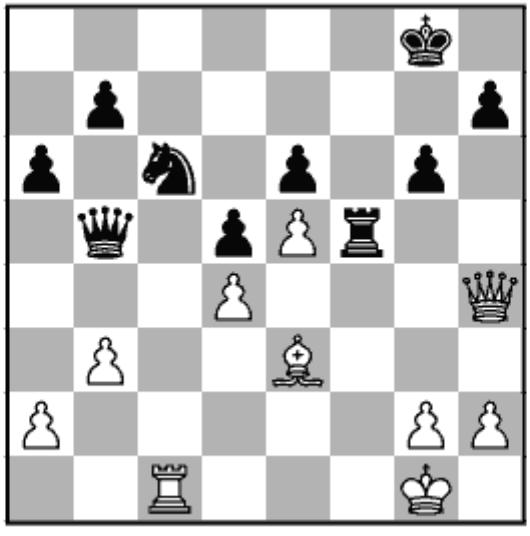
Solution 288: White to play

Heberla – Gholami (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

Just two accurate moves are enough to give White a decisive advantage: **27 Nd2!** (not 27 Rff1? Rc8 28 Qb5 {28 Qxd5 Rxc3 =+} 28…Rhg8! 29 Nd2 {29 g3?! Rxc3 =+} 29…Rc7 with an unclear position) **27…Qa7** (27…Qa8 loses to 28 Nc4 +–) **28 Nc4!** (instead after 28 Rxd5? Rxd5 29 Qxd5 Rc8 Black can survive) and now that the knight is fully in the attack, Black has no chance to resist. For instance: **28…Rc8** (28…dxc4 29 Rfb5 +–) **29 Qxd5** (or 29 Na5!? Rc7 30 Qxd5 +–) **29…Qa6** (29…Rhd8 loses to 30 Qxf7 Rc7 31 Ra5 +–, while after 29… Rc7 there are various wins, including 30 Qe4! Rxc4 {30…Qa6 31 Rfb5 +–} 31 Ra5 +–) **30 Qb5** (or 30 Na5 Rc7 31 Qb5 +–) **30…Qxb5 31 Rfxb5 Rxc4** (31…Rc7 32 Na5 +–) **32 Rxb7+ Ka8 33 Rxe7** with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 289: White to play

Storme – Mullon

Stockholm 2018/19

At the board it was no doubt hard to realize that White should be looking for a way to equalize. **26 Qe1!** (the 'active' 26 h3? Qd3 27 Bh6 was played in the game, when Black could have played 27…Kf7! –/+, nullifying the threat of 28 Rxc6, while the problem of the d4-pawn remains) **26…Qd3 27 Rd1 Qe4** (27…Qc2 28 Qd2 =) **28 Qd2** with a roughly equal position.

back

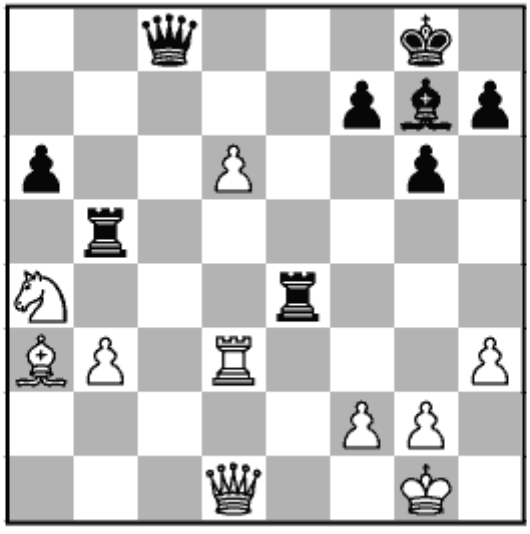
Solution 290: White to play

Ganaus – Vestby-Ellingsen

Stockholm 2018/19

Because of the threat against e5, White does not have time to defend his knight – but for tactical reasons he doesn't need to! **15 Qf3!** (not 15 f4? Bxe5! 16 dxe5 {16 fxe5 Kxg5 is unclear} 16…Qxd1+ 17 Rxd1 Nd7 with a roughly equal position) **15… Kxg5 16 Qg3+** (also good is 16 Be2!? Kh6 17 Kd2 +–) **16… Kf5** (or 16…Kh6 17 Bd3! cxd3 18 Kd2 Qe8 19 Rh1+ Qh5 20 Rxh5+ Kxh5 21 Qh2+ +– with an easy win) **17 Be2 Ke6** (or 17…Bxe5 18 dxe5 Ke6 19 Qf4 +–) and now White has more than one path to victory; e.g., **18 Bg4+ Kf7 19 Bh5+ Kf8 20 Qf4+** (after the weaker 20 Qg6?! Qd5 21 Qe8+ Kg7, as played in the game, Black should survive) **20…Bf6 21 exf6 exf6 22 Kd2 +–** with a decisive advantage. **22…Be6** is met by **23 Re1**.

back



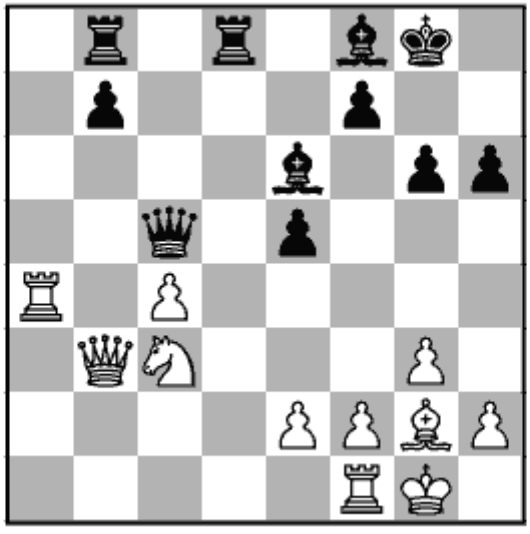
Solution 291: Black to play

Tran Tuan Minh – Raghunandan

Mumbai 2018/19

Black can halt the pawn's advance by seizing a sudden chance to attack the white king. **29…Qe8!** (29…Qe6? loses to 30 d7 Re1+ 31 Kh2 +–, while after 29…Rbe5? 30 d7 +– Black loses because he doesn't have a queen check on b8, and after 30… Qd8, as played in the game, White wins with 31 Kh2 Re1 32 Qc2 +–) **30 Qd2!** (White must find some 'only' moves just to fight for a draw; not 30 d7? Re1+ 31 Kh2 Qb8+ –+, while 30 Kh2? loses to 30…Rd4! 31 Rxd4 Qe5+ 32 g3 Qxd4 –+) **30… Re1+ 31 Kh2 Re2 32 Qc1!** (32 Qd1? Be5+ 33 Kg1 Bxd6 –+) **32…Qe5+** (32…Be5+? 33 f4 is unclear) **33 Rg3** (33 f4? Rxg2+ 34 Kxg2 Qe2+ –+) **33…Rb8**. The d-pawn is going nowhere and Black has a big advantage. White's best chance of salvation lies in **34 f4!**.

back



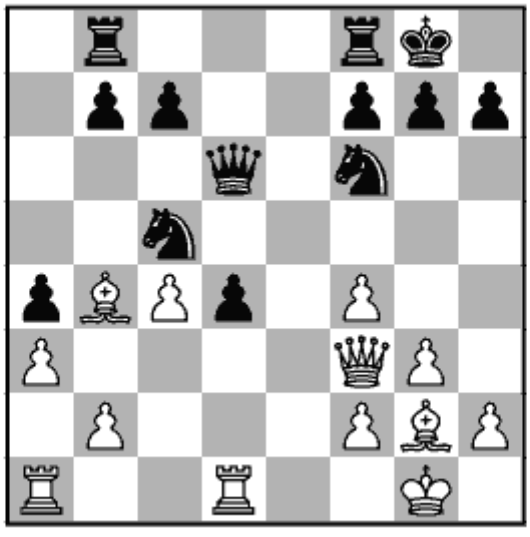
Solution 292: Black to play

Ratnesan – H.Witt

Hastings 2018/19

He needs to deprive White of the d5-square by removing the pawn from c4. **22…b5!** (not 22…Rdc8? 23 Bd5 with a roughly equal position) **23 Nxb5** was played in the game. Now **23…Rdc8!** would have brought Black close to victory thanks to his active pieces. For example: **24 Qf3** (24 Qe3 Qxe3 25 fxe3 Bxc4 26 Na7 Rc5! and things are bad for White) **24… Bxc4 25 Na7!** (25 Nc3?! Rb3 26 Ne4 Qb5 –+) **25…Rc7 26 Nc6 Rb3** with a large advantage. White's best option is to give up an exchange by **27 Rxc4 Qxc4 28 Nxe5 –/+**.

back



Solution 293: White to play

Vantika – Srihari

Mumbai 2018/19

23 Rd3!

Black has a big problem holding on to his d4-pawn, as White will be happy to give up two rooks for the queen in order to win it. Not 23 Rd2? (as chosen in the game) 23…Nfe4 24 Re2 f5 with unclear play. And after moves like 23 Rab1?! or 23 Re1?! Rfe8 White has only a small advantage.

23…Qb6!?

23…Rbd8?! 24 Rad1 b6 25 h3!? (it is useful to make some *luft* before taking on d4) 25…Rfe8 26 Rxd4 Qxd4 27 Rxd4 Rxd4 28 Qc6 +– gives White a decisive advantage, while after 23… Rfe8 he can choose 24 Qd1 +/– or 24 Rad1 Re4 +/–.

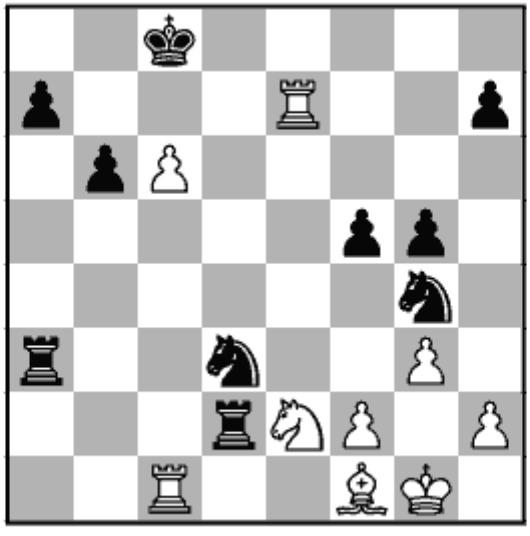
24 Bxc5 Qxc5 25 Qd1 b5

Or: 25…Qxc4 26 Rxd4 +/–; after 25…Qb6, 26 Rb1!? +/– is the simplest, though several moves lead to a big advantage.

26 cxb5 Qxb5 27 Rxd4 +/–

with an extra pawn and good winning chances.

back



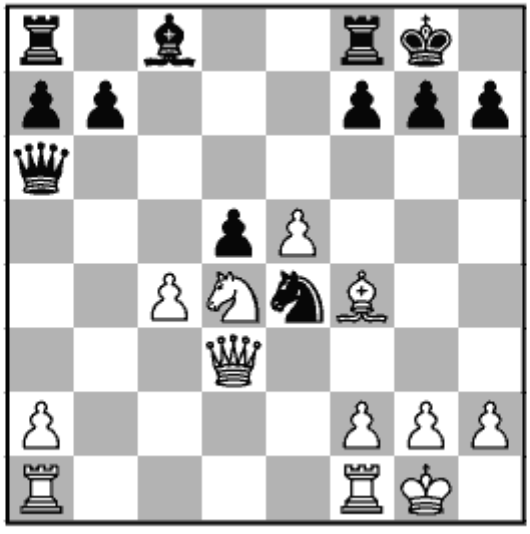
Solution 294: White to play

Calzetta Ruiz – Schnabel

Stockholm 2018/19

The lonely-looking black king is a clue for how White should proceed: **33 Nd4!** (with 33 Re8+ Kc7 34 Re7+ Kc8, as played in the game, White makes no progress) **33…Nxc1 34 Ne6 Rd8** (34…Nf6?! makes things easier for White: 35 Rc7+ Kb8 36 Rf7 +–) **35 Rc7+!** (this idea is so strong that it would still win even if White first threw in the bishop on a6) **35…Kb8 36 Rb7+ Kc8 37 Rb8+! Kxb8 38 c7+** +– with an easy win.

back



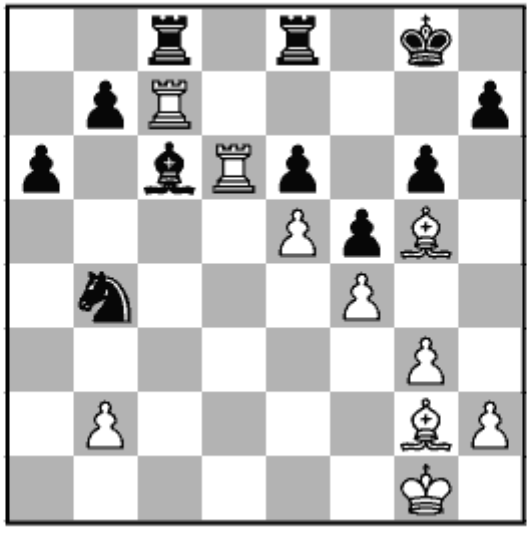
Solution 295: White to play

Schekachikhin – Lyrberg

Stockholm 2018/19

16 Qe3! (after 16 Rfe1?! Be6 Black is worse, but is far better off than after the text-move) **16…Qxc4** (16…Be6 17 f3 Nc5 18 Nxe6 gives White a decisive advantage; for example, 18…fxe6 19 cxd5 and now 19…exd5 20 Qxc5 Rxf4 21 Qxd5+ +– or 19…Qc4 {as played in the game} 20 Bg5 +–) **17 Rfc1 Qb4 18 f3 Nc5** (18…g5 19 Bxg5 Nxg5 20 Qxg5+ +–) **19 Rab1 Qa5 20 Rb5 +–** and Black loses a knight.

back



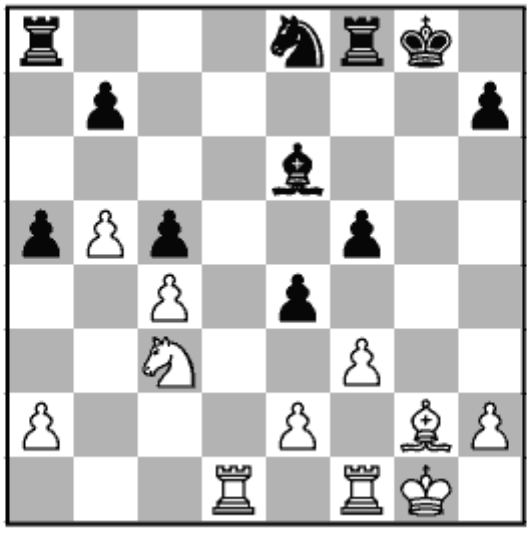
Solution 296: White to play

Mullon – Mullick

Stockholm 2018/19

27 Bxc6! (in the game 27 Rxc8? Rxc8 28 Rxe6 Bxg2 29 Kxg2 Rc2+ led to an unclear position) **27…bxc6** (27…Nxc6 28 Rxb7 +–) **28 Rcd7** (the rook is destined for d7; 28 Ra7 Ra8 29 Rad7 is similar) **28…Nd5 29 Bh6 +–** and Black loses because his king is locked in. There may follow **29…Kh8** (29…Re7 30 Rxd5 +–) **30 Ra7 Re7 31 Rxc6**.

back



Solution 297: Black to play

Navalgund – Czebe

Mumbai 2018/19

The white knight on c3 secures three pawns at once, whereas the black knight serves no useful role. So it makes sense to seek to exchange it off.

23…Nf6!

23…e3?! 24 f4 +/– is good for White, while in the game White won after 23…Bxc4? 24 fxe4 Ng7 (Black isn't saved by 24…fxe4 25 Bxe4 Rxf1+ 26 Kxf1 Rb8 27 Rd7 +–) 25 exf5 Nxf5 26 Bxb7 +–.

24 fxe4 Nxe4!

The only way to hold! Not 24…fxe4? 25 Rd6! Rae8 26 Rf4 +–.

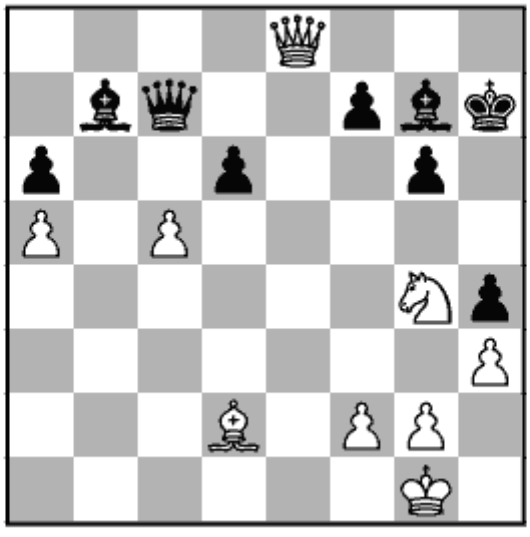
25 Nxe4

Black need not fear 25 Nd5 Rad8.

25…fxe4 26 Bxe4 Bxc4

and the position is close to a draw. For example, **27 b6!?** (27 Bxb7 Rab8 =) **27…Rae8 28 Rxf8+ Kxf8 29 Bxb7 Rb8**.

back



Solution 298: Black to play

Mohite – Laxman

Mumbai 2018/19

34…f5!

34…dxc5? 35 Bg5 Bc6 (as played in the game; 35…Qc6 36 Nf6+! Bxf6 37 Qxc6 =) 36 Qe2 gives White reasonable compensation. 36…Bb5 is met by 37 Qd2.

35 Nh6!?

Or: 35 cxd6 Qxd6 –+; 35 Ne3 dxc5 –+.

35…Bd5!

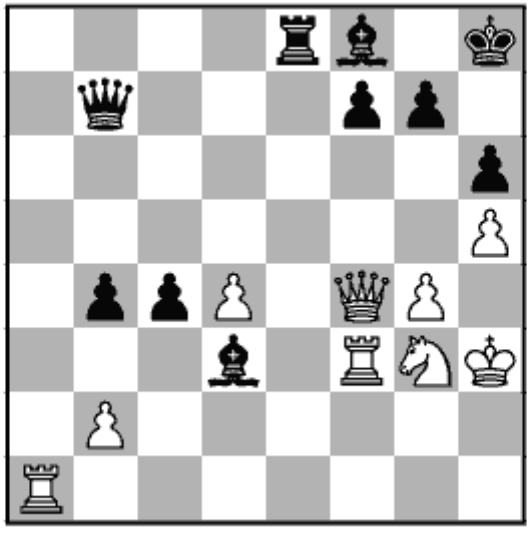
Rather than being an attacking piece, the knight is now trapped on h6, and Black has a large advantage. Instead 35…Bxh6? 36 cxd6 Qc6 (36…Qxd6 37 Qf7+ Bg7 38 Bc3 =) 37 Qe7+ Bg7 38 f3 gives Black no advantage because of the loose h4-pawn and the possible repetition after 38…Bc8 39 Qxh4+ Kg8 40 Qd8+ =.

36 cxd6

36 c6 Qxc6 37 Qxc6 Bxc6 –/+.

36…Qxd6 37 Nxf5 gxf5 38 Qh5+ Kg8 –/+

back



Solution 299: Black to play

Snehal – Aaryan

Mumbai 2018/19

Black should seize the opportunity to pin down the g3-knight at the cost of a mere pawn.

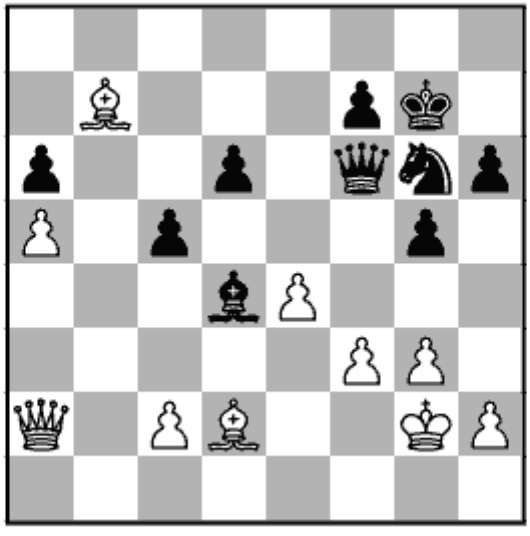
33…Bd6!

The sluggish 33…f6? 34 Re3 = gave Black no advantage in the game, while both 33…Kg8?! 34 Rf2 =+ (or 34 Re3 =+) and 33…b3?! 34 Rxd3!? cxd3 35 Rd1 =+ yield only a slight plus.

34 Qxf7 Qxf7 35 Rxf7 Re3 –+

White will not be able to stop the c-pawn because he is chained to defending the g3-knight. For example: **36 Rg1 Kg8** (perhaps 36…c3!? 37 bxc3 bxc3 38 Kh4 Be7+ –+ is simpler) **37 Rd7 Bf4 38 Kh4** (38 Rd8+ Kf7 –+) **38…c3 39 bxc3 bxc3 40 Rd5 c2 41 Rc5 Rf3 –+** and White's position is completely hopeless. He has almost no moves left.

back



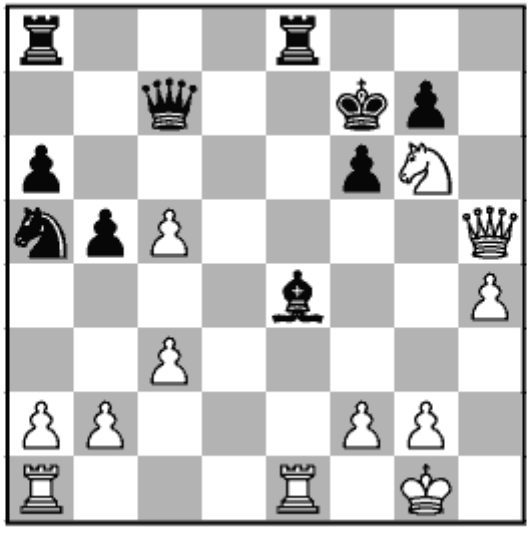
Solution 300: Black to play

R.Prajesh – Šafranska

Mumbai 2018/19

The fact that the white pieces are a long way from their king should have helped guide your decision. **36…Nh4+!** (in the game, 36…Ne5? 37 Qa3 proved unclear) **37 gxh4 g4! 38 Qa3** (38 Qb3 fails due to 38…Qxh4 –+ or 38…c4 –+, while 38 e5 is met by 38…Qxh4 39 fxg4 Qf2+ –+) **38…Qxh4** (White has protected the f3-pawn, but now Black comes in from the other side) **39 fxg4** (39 Be3 Qh3+ 40 Kg1 gxf3 41 Bxd4+ cxd4 –+) **39…Qf2+ 40 Kh3 Be5 –+**.

back



Solution 301: White to play

R.Mohammad – Saptarshi (based on)

Mumbai 2018/19

White needs to drive Black's king back so that his rook will not be protected on e6. **25 Nh8++!** (both 25 Rxe4? Rxe4 26 Qd5+ Re6 and 25 Nf4+? Kf8 26 Rad1 Qf7 are unclear) **25… Kf8** (or 25…Kg8 26 Rxe4 Rxe4 27 Qd5+ Re6 28 Qxa8+ +–) **26 Rxe4 Rxe4 27 Qd5 +–**. Black can't put either rook on e8 because it would allow instant mate, and **27…Qb7** is met by **28 c6**.

back

Solution 302: Black to play

Thapa – Mrudul

Mumbai 2018/19

42…Qd2 43 Qb8+

43 Qb2 Qe1+ 44 Kg2 e3, as played in the game, is hopeless for White, as 45 f3 can be met by 45…Nf6 –+ or 45…e2 –+.

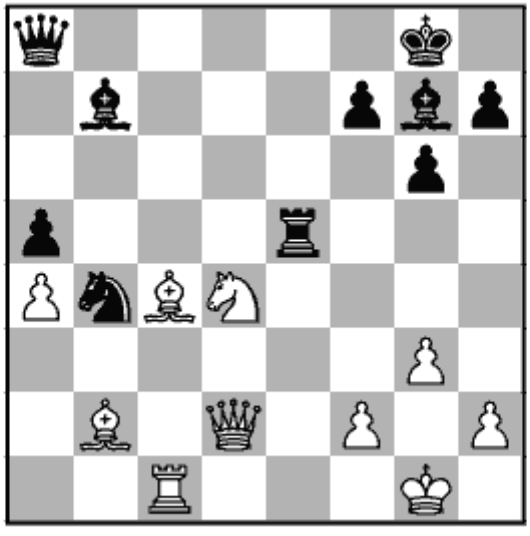
43…Ng8!

Black wants to open up the white king with the …e3 advance, so avoids putting his king on h7, as this would allow White a saving Qb1+ later on. So not 43…Kh7? 44 Qb2 Qe1+ 45 Kg2 e3 (45…Nxc6 46 Qc2 =) 46 f3 (46 Qb1+!?) 46…e2 (46…Nf6 47 Qb1+ =) 47 Qxe2 Qxa1 (47…Ne3+ 48 Kh3 is unclear) 48 Qc2+ =.

44 Qb2 Qe1+ 45 Kg2 e3

Black wins by deflecting the white queen from its defence of the bishop: **46 f3 e2** (not 46…Nf2? 47 Qb1 =, but 46…N4f6!? 47 a5 Ne7 –+ also works) **47 Qxe2** (47 Nxe2 Ne3+ 48 Kh3 Qf1+ –+) **47…Qxa1 –+** with an extra piece.

back



Solution 303: Black to play

Vigneshwaran – Kravtsiv

Chennai 2012

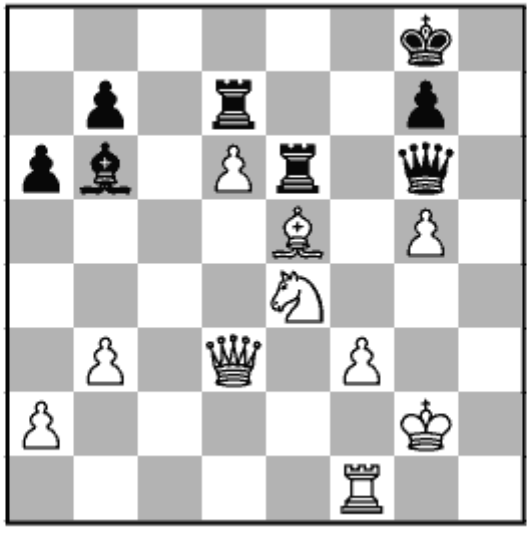
30…Qd8!

Only after this move is Black OK. 30…Bh1? loses to 31 f3 +–, while after 30…Re8? (played in the game) 31 Bxf7+! Kxf7 32 Rc7+ Re7 33 Qf4+ +– White has a decisive attack. And 30…Bd5? 31 Nb5 Re7 32 Bxd5 Nxd5 (32…Qxd5 33 Rc8+ Bf8 34 Qxd5 +–) 33 Nd6! gives Black a difficult position because of the weakness of his back rank: 33…Nc7 34 Bxg7 Kxg7 35 Rc5 +/–.

31 Nb3 Qxd2 32 Nxd2 Rf5 33 Bxg7 Kxg7

with an equal position.

back



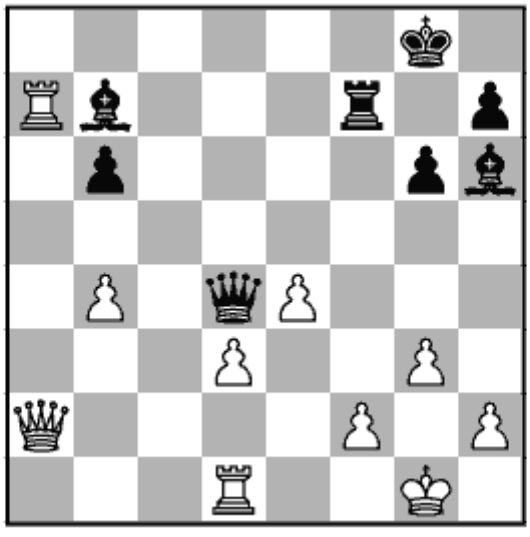
Solution 304: Black to play

Zhang Xiao – Maisuradze

Tianjin 2018/19

Black wins with a beautiful sequence: **39…Rxe5!** (39…Qf5? 40 Bg3 +/– was played in the game) **40 Nf6+ gxf6!** (rather than modestly moving his king, Black sacrifices his queen; after 40…Kf7? 41 Qxg6+ Kxg6 42 Nxd7 Rxg5+ Black is merely hanging on) **41 Qxg6+ Rg7 42 Qxf6 Rexg5+ –+**. The only way to avoid mate is to give up the queen on g5.

back



Solution 305: Black to play

Ornstein – S.Asaka

Stockholm 2018/19

Black can only survive thanks to a tactical trick.

34…Bd5!

Not:

a) The game ended 34…Kf8? 35 Rxb7 1-0 in view of 35… Rxb7 36 Qa8+ +–.

b) 34…Kg7? 35 Qa1 Qxa1 36 Raxa1 +/– and the central pawns will soon advance.

c) After 34…Qd7? 35 d4 +/– Black is unlikely to achieve a draw.

35 exd5 Rxf2! 36 Qxf2

36 Ra8+ changes nothing: 36…Kg7! 37 Ra7+ Kg8.

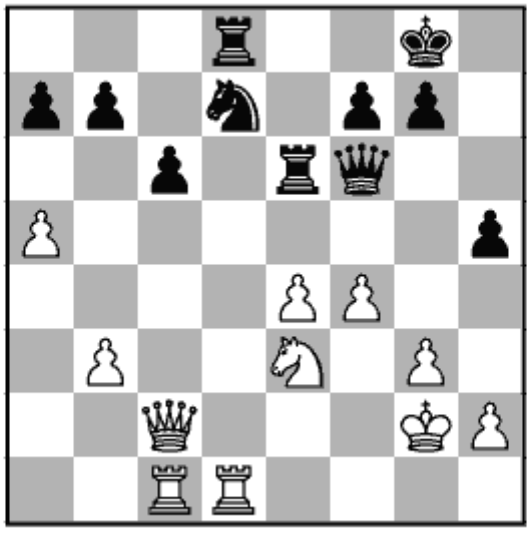
36…Be3 37 Ra2

37 Rf1 Bxf2+ 38 Rxf2 and now both 38…Qxd3 = and 38…Qxb4!? = are OK.

37…Bxf2+ 38 Rxf2 Qxb4

White can't hold the d5-pawn. Because the white king is exposed to checks, the queen is not inferior to the rooks and the game is close to equal.

back



Solution 306: Black to play

Snehal – Nepal

Mumbai 2018/19

First of all, he needs to get out of the pin.

29…Rde8!

Other moves offer very little hope: 29…g6? loses to 30 e5 Qe7 31 Qd2 +–, while 29…Nf8?! 30 e5 +/– is dismal. In the game, 29…b6? put up no resistance.

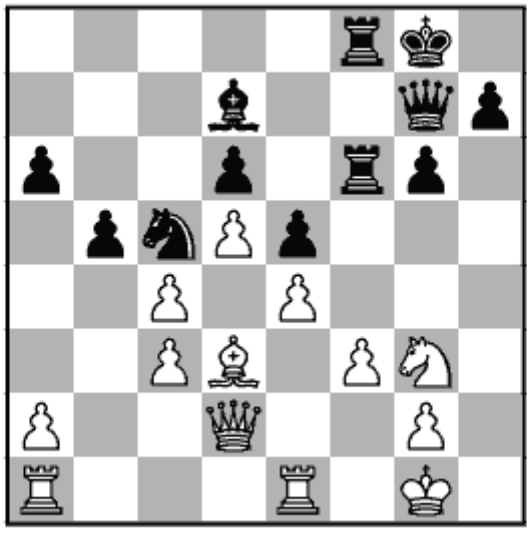
30 Rxd7

30 Nc4!? Rxe4 31 Rd2 offers White compensation, but he should certainly avoid 30 e5?! Nxe5 –/+ 31 fxe5?! (31 Qc3!) 31…Rxe5 –+.

30…Rxe4 31 Re1 Rxe3 32 Rxe3 Rxe3 33 Rxb7

Black is fully in the game. He can play **33…g6** since then **34 Rxa7?** fails to **34…Qd4 –+**.

back



Solution 307: Black to play

Shetye – Kravtsiv

New Delhi 2012

31…h5!

Black will push his h-pawn and attack on the kingside. Less good is 31…Rxf3?! 32 gxf3 Rxf3 33 Re3 Qh6 34 Nf1 Qg5+, with unclear play.

32 Nf1

Or:

a) 32 cxb5 h4 33 Nf1 h3 –/+.

b) 32 Bc2 h4 33 Nf1 h3 –+ was played in the game.

c) 32 Be2 h4 33 Nf1 (slightly better is 33 Nh1 g5 34 Rf1 bxc4 –/+) 33…g5 34 cxb5 (34 Nh2!? g4 –/+) 34…g4 35 fxg4 axb5 with a decisive advantage.

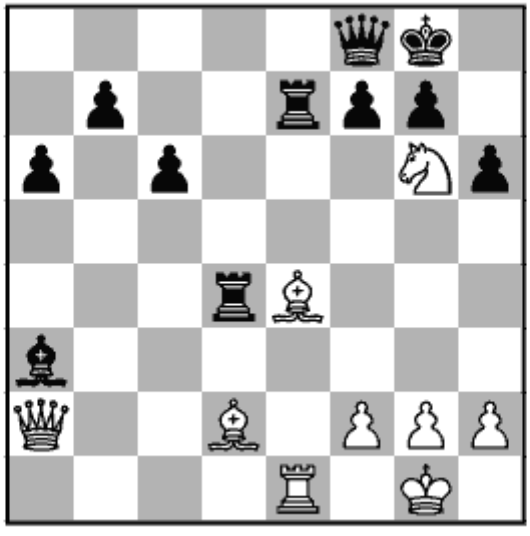
32…h4 33 Nh2

33 Be2 g5 –/+.

33…h3 34 gxh3 Rf4 35 Bf1 Qh6 –/+

Black’s advantage is large, and close to decisive.

back



Solution 308: Black to play

J.Williams – T.Kung

Burlingame 2019

Black needs to exchange as many pieces as possible, since then White will have nothing left to attack the queenside pawns with.

25…Rxd2!

25…Rexe4? 26 Nxf8 +– was played in the game. After 25…Qd8? 26 Nxe7+ Bxe7 27 Re2 +– White will not allow an exchange of rooks: 27…Bb4 28 Bxb4 Rxb4 29 g3 +–.

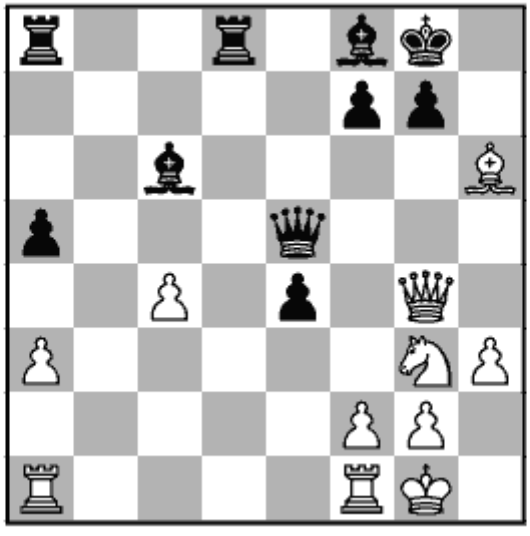
26 Nxe7+ Bxe7

Not 26…Qxe7? 27 Qxd2 Bb4 28 Bh7+ +–.

27 Qxd2 Bb4 28 Qd1 Bxe1 29 Qxe1 g6

with unclear play. The bishop will not reach c8, and the queen working on its own will not be able to win the b7-pawn.

back



Solution 309: Black to play

Polgar-Shutzman – J.Wang

Burlingame 2019

24…Bd7 25 Qf4 Qe7!

Now Black wins this bishop without losing much in return. After 25…Bd6?! (as played in the game) 26 Qxe5 Bxe5 27 Be3 Bxa1 28 Rxa1 White should survive if he plays well. 25…Qe6?! 26 Bg5 f6 27 Bh4 also gives Black a much smaller advantage than he could have had.

26 Bg5

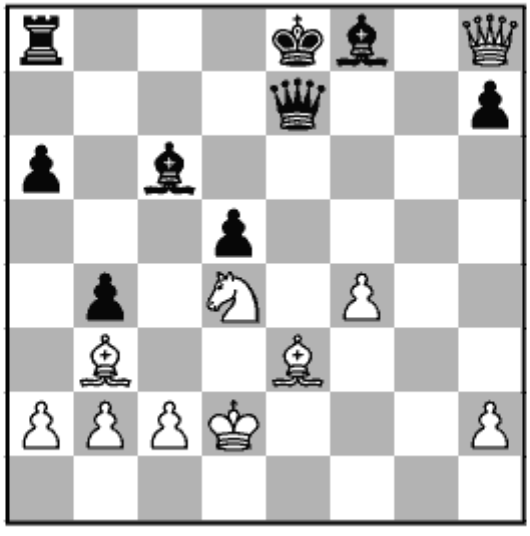
26 Qg5 Qd6 –+.

26…f6 27 Bh4

27 Nxe4 fxg5 28 Nxg5 Qf6 –+.

27…g5 –+

back



Solution 310: Black to play

M.Hasan – Snehal

Mumbai 2018/19

Black must preserve his light-squared bishop, as without it his king would be too weak.

27…Bd7!

After 27…Kd7? 28 Nxc6 Kxc6 (the game featured 28… Qxe3+? 29 Kxe3 Bc5+ 30 Qd4 +–) 29 Qd4 it may not be immediately obvious, but the king's position on c6 will prove close to hopeless.

28 Qg8

28 Bxd5?! Rd8 29 Qg8 Qg7 even leaves Black for preference.

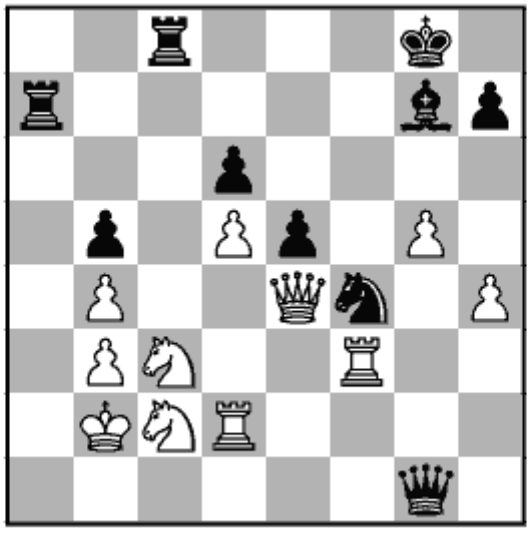
28…Rc8

28…Rd8!?.

29 Qxd5 Qd6 30 Qf7+ Kd8 31 Qxh7 Kc7 +=

White is a little better, but Black should not expect any major problems holding the position.

back



Solution 311: White to play

Gajek – Gukesh

Mumbai 2018/19

34 Rxf4??

This fatally opens lines against the white king. After 34 Re3!?, for instance, White is no worse.

34…Rxc3! –+

With the knight removed from c3 and the long diagonal open, the white king is much too weak.

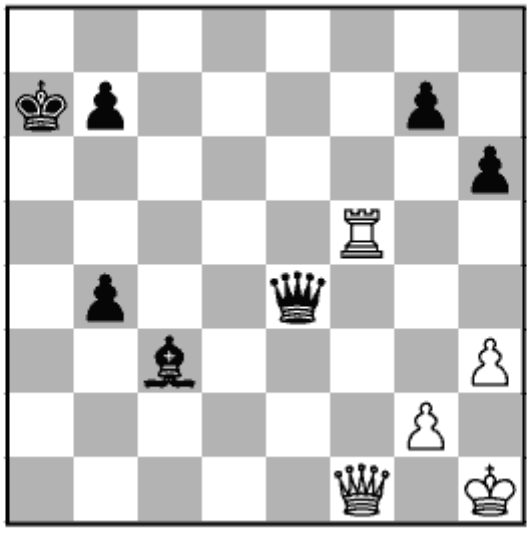
35 Rg4

After 35 Rf8+ (as played in the game) 35…Kxf8 36 Kxc3 Rf7 –+ the rook goes to f4, while 35 Rff2 Rac7! gives Black a decisive attack: 36 Rg2 (36 Ne1 Rc1 –+) 36…Rxb3+ 37 Kxb3 Qb1+ –+.

35…Rxc2+! 36 Kxc2 Ra2+

with an easy win: **37 Kd3 Qf1+ 38 Qe2 Qh3+ –+**.

back



Solution 312: White to play

Naroditsky – Saidy

Burlingame 2019

Using tempo-gaining checks and threats, White creeps up on the black king.

53 Qf2+ Kb8

Or:

a) The game concluded 53…Ka6 54 Qa2+ Kb6 55 Qa5+ Kc6 56 Qc5+ Kd7 57 Rf7+ 1-0.

b) 53…Qd4 54 Qa2+ Kb6 55 Rd5!? (not 55 Qa5+? Kc6, with unclear play, though only slightly weaker is 55 Qe6+ Ka7 56 Ra5+ Kb8 57 Rd5 +–) 55…b3 (55…Qe3 56 Qa5+ Kc6 57 Qb5+ Kc7 58 Rd7+ +–) 56 Qxb3+ Qb4 57 Qc2 with a decisive advantage for White.

54 Qc5!

White locks the black king in a box so he has nowhere to run. Not 54 Rf8+? Kc7 55 Qc5+ Qc6 +=.

54…Qc6

Or: 54…Bf6 55 Qd6+ +–; 54…Qb1+ 55 Kh2 +–.

55 Qf8+ Ka7 56 Ra5+ Kb6 57 Qd8+ Qc7 58 Rb5+ +–

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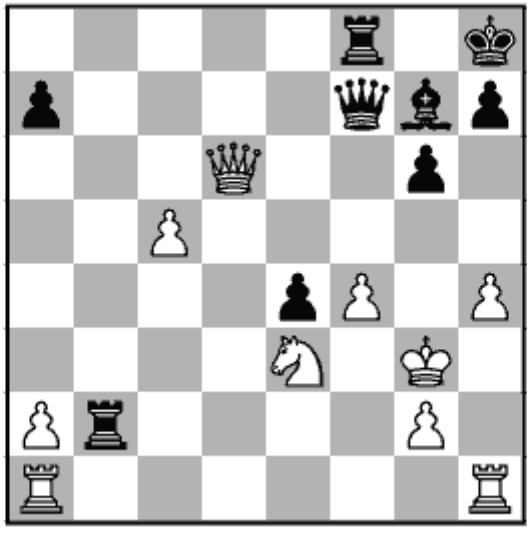

Solution 313: Black to play

Hawkins – Lalić (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

28…Re2!!

Not 28…Rd2?, as White then defends with 29 Qxd2 Qxf4+ 30 Kh3 Be5 31 Qe1 +–. However, seeing this line may suggest what Black should play.

29 Rae1

29 Nd5 Bxa1 –+.

29…Rd2!

Now that the white rook has occupied e1, White lacks the defence against mate that we saw in the 28…Rd2? line.

30 Qxd2 Qxf4+ 31 Kh3 Be5

White is mated in a few moves: **32 Nf1 Qf5+ 33 g4 Qf3+ 34 Ng3 Qxg3#**.

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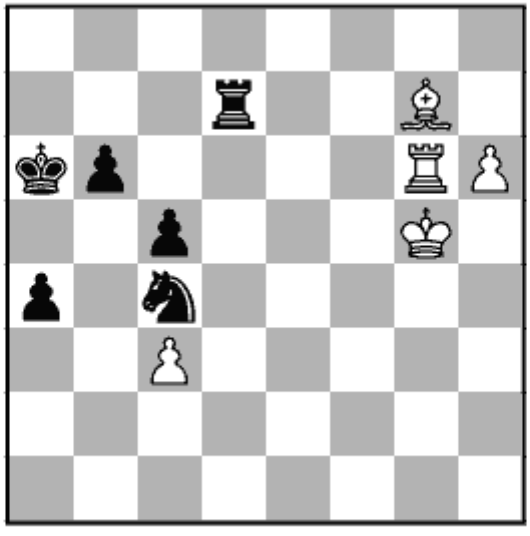

Solution 314: White to play

Z.Li – Dragun

Burlingame 2019

With pawns racing to promote on both sides and a material imbalance likely, every tempo is worth its weight in gold.

54 Kf6!

Not 54 h7? Ne5! 55 Bxe5 Rxh7 =. This explains why White needs to be so precise.

54…a3 55 h7 Rd8 56 Rg1

Or:

a) 56 Kf7? Kb5 57 Rg1 Ka4 (57…Ra8!? = was played in the game) 58 Bf8 Ne5+ 59 Kg7 Rd7+ =.

b) 56 Ke6 Kb5 and now 57 Bf6? Re8+ 58 Kd7 Ra8 = is a draw, so White should play 57 Rg1, transposing to the 56 Rg1 line.

56…Kb5 57 Ke6!

Gaining an important tempo because if Black moves his king to a4, he will leave the c4-knight unprotected. Not 57 h8Q? Rxh8 58 Bxh8 Ka4 59 Ke6 Kb3, when White fails to win by one tempo: 60 Kd5 (60 Re1 Nb2 =) 60…Ne3+ 61 Kc6 (61 Ke4 Nc2 =) 61…c4 =.

57…Re8+

57…Ka4 58 Bf6 Re8+ (58…Ra8 59 Rg8 +–) 59 Kd5 Kb3 60 Rg8 +–; 57…Ra8 58 Bf6 Re8+ (58…a2 59 Ra1 +–) 59 Kd7 Ra8 60 h8Q transposes to the 57…Re8+ line.

58 Kd7 Ra8 59 h8Q Rxh8 60 Bxh8

Now White's king is closer to the pawns, and this is enough to win.

60…Ka4 61 Kc6 a2

61…Kb3 62 Re1! a2 63 Kd5 +–.

62 Re1! Kb3 63 Kd5 Na3

63…Ne3+ 64 Rxe3 +–.

64 c4 +–

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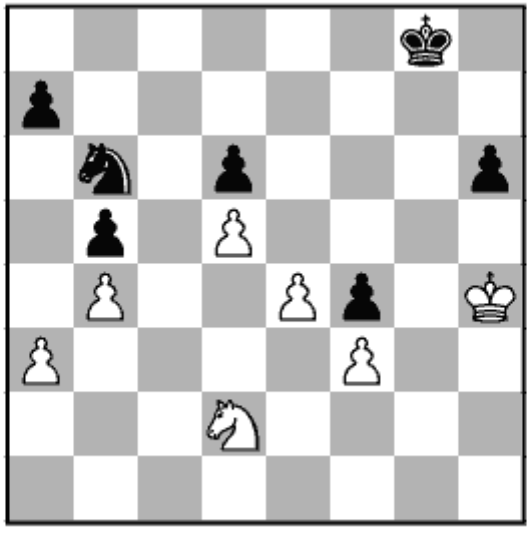

Solution 315: White to play

Kishor – Laoussing (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

32 Nb3!?

32 Kh5?! is imprecise because of 32…Nc4 33 Nb3 Kg7 34 Nd4 a6! 35 Nf5+ Kf6 36 Nxh6 (36 Kxh6 Nxa3 37 Nxd6 Nc2 =) 36…Nxa3, when White's advantage is insufficient to win.

32…Nc4 33 Nd4

White makes sure to play this at a point when the reply with …a6 doesn't help Black. 33 Kh5?! Kg7 transposes to the 32 Kh5?! line.

33…Nxa3

33…a6? 34 Nf5 Nxa3 35 Nxd6 Nc2 36 Kg4 Nxb4 37 Kxf4 +–.

34 Kh5

34 Nf5?! Nc4 is unclear.

34…Kh7

Not: 34…Kg7? 35 Nf5+ Kf6 36 Nxd6 +–; 34…Nc4? 35 Kxh6 Kf7 36 Kg5 +–.

35 e5!

White has an obvious advantage, though Black can still fight.

35…Nc4 36 e6 Ne3

36…Kg7? 37 Nxb5 +–.

37 Nxb5

37 e7?! Nxd5 =.

37…Nxd5 38 Nxa7 Nxb4!

After 38…Kg7? 39 Nc6! Kf6 40 e7 Nxe7 41 Nxe7 Kxe7 42 Kxh6 White wins thanks to the outside passed b-pawn.

39 e7 Nd5! 40 e8N!

The last few moves have been forced. The game now moves into an ending with two knights vs one that with very precise play Black should hold. According to the engines, White can do no better than reach a 2N vs P position where the black pawn has crossed the Troitsky Line (details of which can be found in any good general endgame guide). Clearly White has excellent practical chances though.

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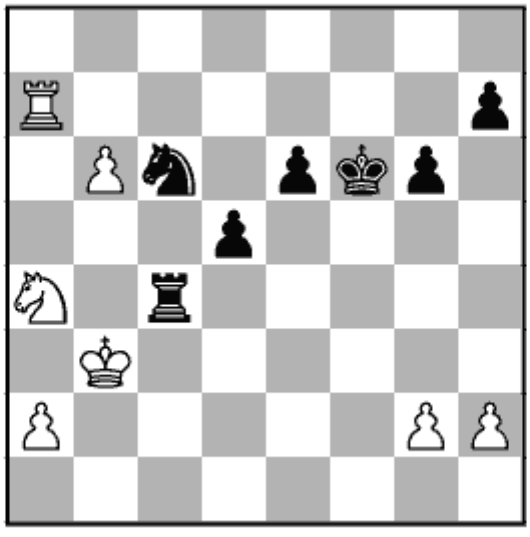

Solution 316: White to play

Kravtsiv – R.Castellanos

Livigno 2012

The first task is to limit Black's ability to check the white king.

40 Ka3!

Not:

a) 40 a3? Ke5 41 b7 Kd6 is unclear.

b) 40 Ra6? (played in the game) 40…Nd4+ 41 Ka3 (41 Kb2 Ke5 =) 41…Nb5+ 42 Kb2 Rb4+ 43 Kc2 Nd4+!? 44 Kc3 Nc6 = and the b-pawn can't advance. 45 b7 is met by 45…d4+ 46 Kc2 Nb8.

40…Nd4

Or:

a) 40…Ke5 41 Rd7! +– and with the enemy king cut off, the b-pawn can advance.

b) 40…d4 is answered with 41 Rxh7 +– or 41 Rd7 +–.

41 Ra5!

Thanks to his precise play, White has brought his rook to a5. He is now winning, as the following variations show: **41… Nc2+ 42 Kb2 Nd4 43 a3 Nc6 44 Ra8 d4 45 Rc8!?** (probably the shortest path to victory; 45 Kb3 Rc1 46 Nb2 +–) **45…d3** (45…Rxa4 46 Rxc6 +–) **46 Nc3 d2 47 Nd1 Rc1 48 Ne3** and Black can resign. **48…Re1** is useless in view of **49 Rxc6 Rxe3 50 Rd6** +–.

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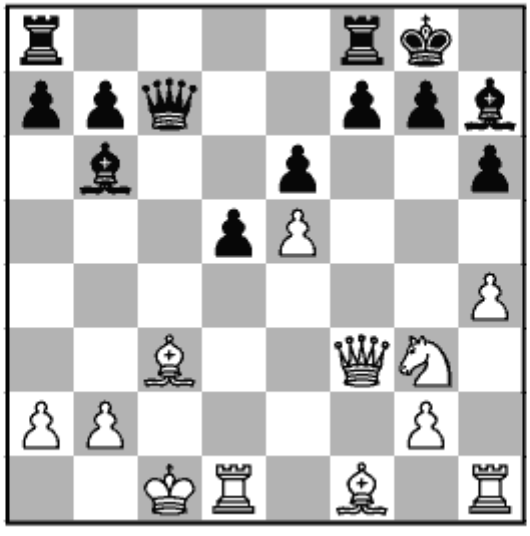

Solution 317: White to play

Babikov – Koykka

Stockholm 2018/19

19 Bd3!

The game featured 19 Ne2? f6 (19…Rac8!? –/+) 20 exf6?! (20 Nf4! Rae8 21 Bd3 maintains some chance of survival) 20… Rxf6 21 Qg3, when Black could have played the fairly simple 21…Qxg3 22 Nxg3 Rc8 –+.

19…Bxd3

19…d4 20 Bxh7+ Kxh7 21 Qe4+ Kg8 22 Rxd4 is unclear.

20 Rxd3 d4 21 Nh5!

Suddenly, White launches an attack, although it does not lead to anything more than equality.

21…dxc3

21…Kh8 22 Qg4 Rg8 23 Rxd4 is unclear.

22 Qg3 cxb2++ 23 Kb1

23 Kxb2? is met by 23…f5 and after 24 Nf6+ Kh8 25 Rd7 Bd4+ –+ Black's attack takes priority thanks to this being check.

23…g6

23…f5 24 Nf6+ (24 exf6!?) 24…Rxf6 25 exf6 and with an extra exchange White is no worse.

24 Nf6+ Kg7

24…Kh8? 25 Rd7 (25 Qf4 +–) 25…Qc4 26 Qxg6 +–.

25 Nh5+ Kh7

25…Kh8?! 26 Qf4 f5 (only move) 27 Nf6 Rxf6 28 Qxh6+ +=.

26 Nf6+ Kg7 =

with a repetition of moves.

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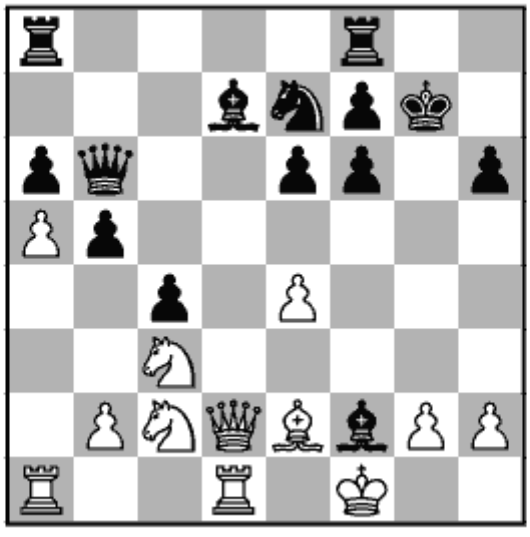

Solution 318: Black to play

Jimenez Martinez – Vitenberg

Stockholm 2018/19

Black needs to appreciate that the f2-bishop is much more valuable than the one on d7, and it must be preserved.

20…Qa7!

After 20…Qc5? (played in the game) 21 Qf4! (not 21 Qxd7? Bg1 –+) Black will have big problems without his dark-squared bishop: 21…Bc6 (21…b4 22 Rxd7 bxc3 23 bxc3!? +–) 22 Qxf2 +–.

21 Qxd7 Qc5!

21…Qxd7? 22 Rxd7 Bc5 23 Bxc4 (or 23 e5!? f5 24 Bf3 +–) 23…bxc4 24 Na4 +–.

22 Qd6

22 Qd2!? Bg1 23 Qf4 Ng6 24 Qg3 Kh7 gives Black compensation for the piece thanks to his g-file play.

22…Qxd6 23 Rxd6 Bc5 24 e5!?

After 24 Rd7 Nc6 Black has gained a vital tempo compared to the 21…Qxd7? line.

24…fxe5 25 Rd7 Rad8 +=

White is still better, but Black should be able to hold on. Note that 25…Nc6? is not good in view of 26 Bf3.

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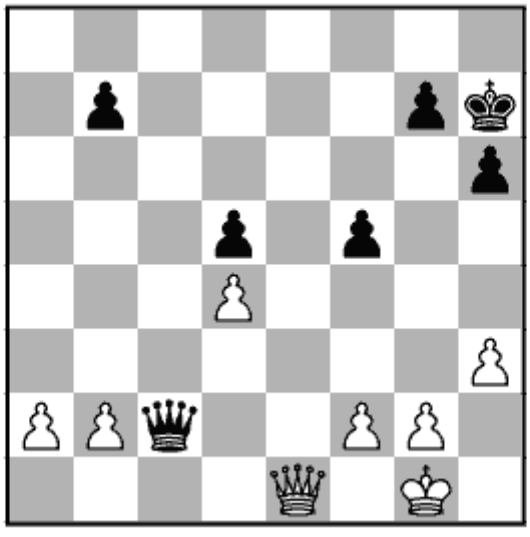

Solution 319: White to play

Mazé – R.Raja

Stockholm 2018/19

Putting the queen on e5 is extremely tempting, but wrong.

34 Qc3!

After 34 Qe5? Qxb2 35 Qxf5+ Kh8 White's extra pawn is not so useful as his king can't easily shelter from the checks. Then 36 Qxd5 Qc1+ 37 Kh2 Qf4+ 38 g3 Qxf2+ 39 Qg2 Qxd4 40 Qxb7 was played in the game, and White shouldn't have been able to make progress with so little cover for his king.

34 Qa1?! Qd2 (or 34…f4!?) 35 b3 f4 gives Black compensation because the white queen is too passive.

34…Qb1+

After 34…Qe2 35 a3 White will gradually realize his advantage. 35…Qd1+ 36 Kh2 Qe2 doesn't help due to 37 f3 +–.

35 Kh2 Qxa2 36 Qc2

Next White will take the f5-pawn, with good chances to win.

36…Qc4

36…Kh8? 37 Qc8+ Kh7 38 Qxf5+ +–.

37 Qxf5+ +/–

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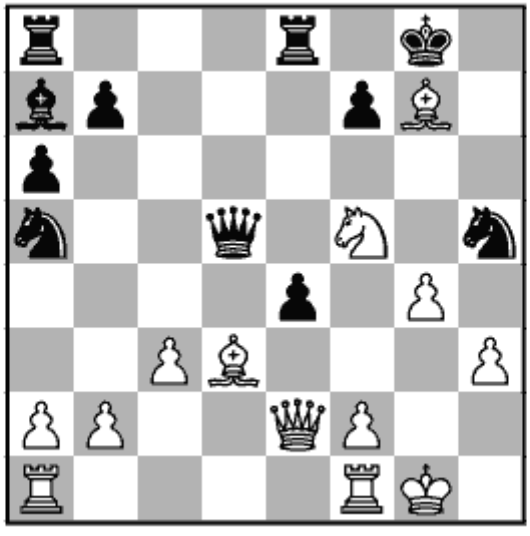


Solution 320: White to play

D.Graham – J.Boswell

Hastings 2018/19

White should transfer his queen to g5, but needs to find the right move-order.

22 Qd2!

Mistaken is 22 Bd4?! Bxd4! (22…exd3? 23 Qd2 +–) 23 cxd4 Ng7! (not 23…exd3? 24 Qd2 +–), when White has only a small advantage.

Also after 22 c4?! Qxd3 (22…exd3!?) 23 Qxd3 exd3 24 gxh5 Nxc4 Black can resist.

22…Nxg7

22…e3 23 Nxe3 Qg5 (23…Bxe3 24 Bh7+ +–) 24 Bd4 +–.

23 Qg5 Qe5 24 Bxe4!

White must deny Black the chance to bring his queen to f6. Not 24 Rae1? (as played in the game) 24…Re6 25 Rxe4 Qf6 =+.

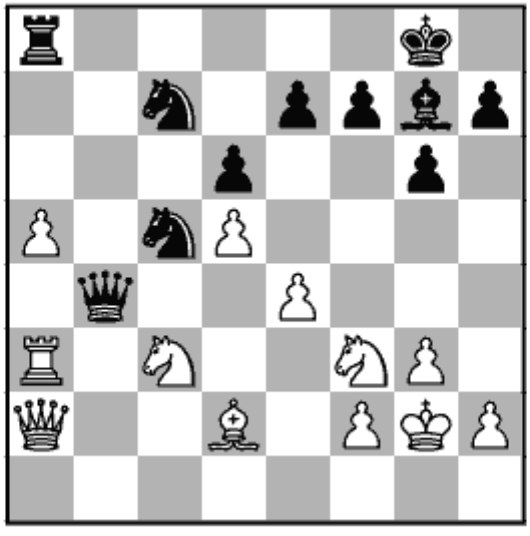
24…Re6

24…Rad8 25 Rae1 +–.

25 Bd5! Qf6 26 Qxg7+ Qxg7 27 Nxg7 +–

with an easy win.

back



Solution 321: White to play

Stabulnieks – Babikov

Stockholm 2018/19

Sometimes active pieces are far more important than pawns.

25 Na4!

After 25 Ng5? (as played in the game) Black could have played 25…Bxc3! 26 Bxc3 Qb7, when thanks to the threat of …Nb5 he is no worse; e.g., 27 Qc4 Nb5 (27…Qb5!? 28 Qd4 f6 is unclear) 28 Ra2 Nxc3 29 Qxc3 Qb3 (29…h6!? is also unclear) 30 Qxb3 Nxb3 31 a6 Ra7 =.

25…Qxe4 26 Nb6 Re8

26…Ra7 27 Re3 +–.

27 Re3 Qf5 28 Qc4!

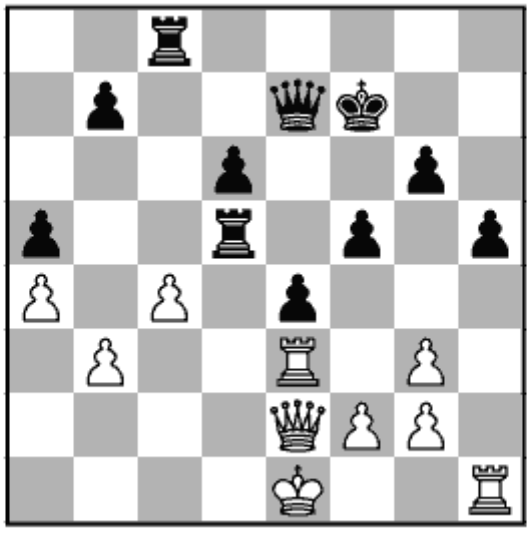
Black has won back his pawn, but now has two problems – the weak e7-pawn and White's now mobile passed a-pawn. His position is close to lost.

28…Bh6!?

After 28…e5?! 29 Bb4 N7a6 30 Bxc5 Nxc5 31 a6 +– or 28… N7a6 29 Bb4 Nxb4 30 Qxb4 +– the a-pawn is too strong.

29 Nd4 Qg4 30 f3 Qh5 31 f4 +/–

back



Solution 322: White to play

D'Costa – Hillarp Persson

Stockholm 2018/19

33 g4!!

After 33 0-0?! Rd4 –/+ White lacks any real compensation for his pawn.

The game proceeded 33 Rxh5? Qf6! (33…gxh5? 34 Qxh5+ Kg7 35 cxd5 =) 34 Rh7+ Kg8 35 Qa2 Kxh7 and Black won easily: 36 cxd5 Rc1+ 37 Ke2 Qd4 38 Qd2 Qc5 0-1.

33…fxg4

33…Qf6 34 0-0 leaves the game unclear after 34…Re5 35 gxf5 or 34…Rd4 35 gxf5 Qxf5 36 f3.

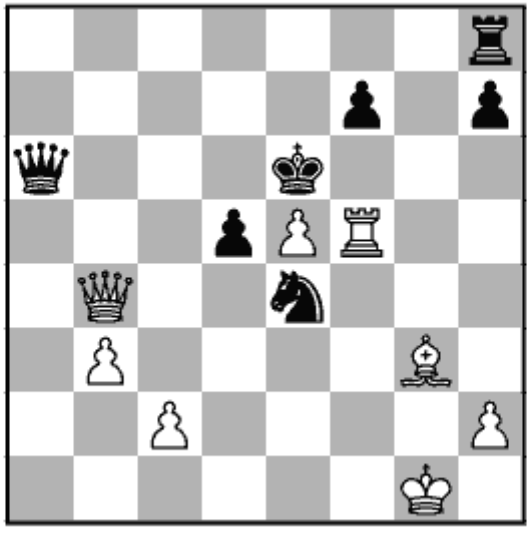
34 Qxg4!

White has managed to exploit the position of the rook on d5.

34…hxg4 35 Rh7+ Kf6 36 Rxe7 Kxe7 37 cxd5

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 323: White to play

Nesterov – E.Mikalsen

Stockholm 2018/19

To break through to the black king, White needs to remove the pawn from d5.

33 Rf4!

White takes aim at the e4-knight and prepares c4.

After 33 Rf1? Rg8 (played in the game), 34 c4 is not scary since Black can reply 34…dxc4. White also gets nothing from 33 Rh5? Rg8 (33…Qa7+!?) 34 Rh6+ Rg6 =.

33…Qc6

Or:

a) 33…Ra8 34 c4 Qa1+ 35 Kg2 Ra2+ 36 Kh3 +–.

b) 33…f5 34 exf6 Nxf6 35 Rxf6+ Kxf6 36 Qd4+ +–.

c) Following 33…Rg8 34 c4 (34 Qxe4?? Qa1+ –+) 34…Qa1+ 35 Kg2 Qa2+ (35…Qxe5 36 cxd5+ Kxd5 37 Qc4+ +–) 36

Kh3 +– the king evades the checks and White wins.

34 Qd4!

Again threatening c4, to which Black has no good reply. Not the immediate 34 c4? in view of 34…dxc4.

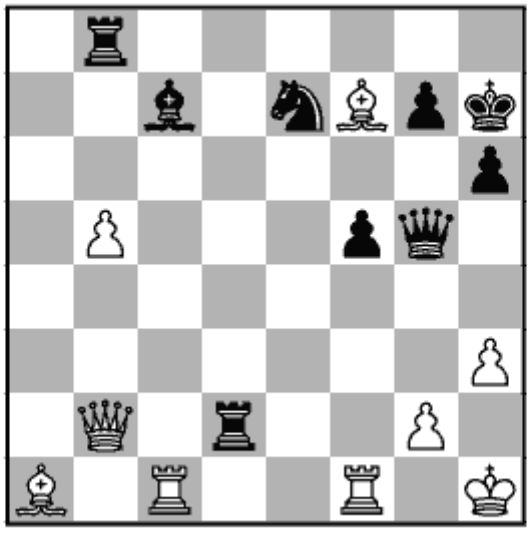
34…Rb8

34…Qxc2 35 Qb6+ Ke7 36 Qb7+ +–.

35 c4 Rxb3 36 cxd5+ Qxd5 37 Rxe4 +–

with an easy win.

back



Solution 324: White to play

D.O'Connor – V.Karthik

Burlingame 2019

40 Bg6+!

In the game, White played 40 Qxd2??, which is equivalent to resignation.

40…Qxg6!?

This move makes White's path to victory the most complicated. After 40…Kxg6 41 Qxg7+ Kh5 42 Qf7+ White wins easily: 42…Qg6 43 g4+ (43 Qxg6+!? Kxg6 44 Rxc7 +–) 43…fxg4 44 Rc5+ +–.

41 Qxd2 Qg3 42 Rxc7 Qxc7

Black has won back the exchange, but White continues his attack.

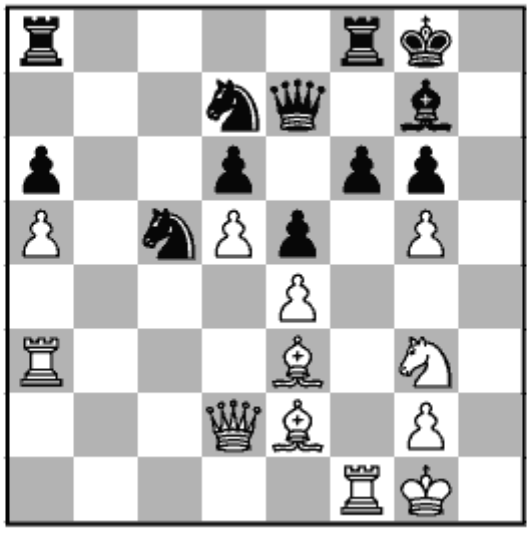
43 Qb2! Qg3

43…Ng6 44 Rxf5 +–.

44 Rf3 Qg5 45 Qe5

Now it is clear that Black has major problems. In fact, his position is hopeless: **45…Rb7** (45…Ra8 46 Kh2 +–) **46 Rg3 Ng6 47 Qd6 Qc1+ 48 Kh2** +–.

back



Solution 325: White to play

A.Byron – Comellas

Hastings 2018/19

A knight on f5 is likely to prove strong enough to justify a piece sacrifice.

39 Bh5!!

After 39 gxf6?! Rxf6 += (as played in the game) White has squandered most of his advantage. The same goes for 39 Bg4?! fxg5 +=.

39…gxh5

Or:

a) 39…fxg5 40 Bxg6 +–.

b) 39…Nxe4 40 Nxe4 gxh5 41 Ng3 fxg5 42 Nf5 Qe8 43 Bxg5 +–.

c) 39…Qe8 40 Nf5! Nxe4 41 Qd1 and now 41…gxh5 42 g6! transposes to the main line. No better is 41…Kh7?! (41…fxg5 42 Bxg6 +–) 42 Nh4 gxh5 43 g6+ +–.

40 Nf5 Qe8 41 g6

Now Black's only way to prolong the resistance is to give up the knight on g3.

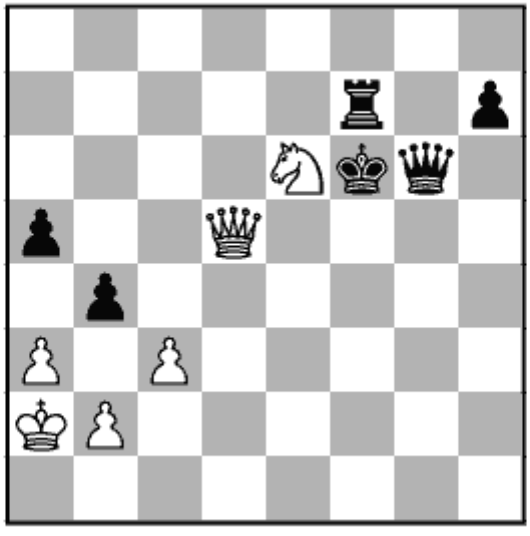
41…Nxe4

41…Kh8 42 Bh6 +–.

42 Qd1 Ng3 43 Nxg3 Qxg6 44 Nf5 +–

Black has returned the piece to avoid being mated, but his position is hopeless. White can win in several ways: **44…Rf7** (44…Qg4 can be met by 45 Qc2 +– or 45 Qe1) **45 Bc1 Qg4 46 Qc2** (or 46 Qe1!? +–) **46…Qb4 47 Qe2 +–**.

back



Solution 326: White to play

A.Hong – Stukopin

Burlingame 2019

White has several possibilities that appear to offer some hope, but only one of them actually enables him to escape.

58 Nd8!

Rather than 58 Qd6? b3+! 59 Kxb3 Rb7+ (played in the game) 60 Ka2 Qf7 –+ or 58 Nf4? Qg4 59 Qd6+ Kg5 60 Ne6+ Kh5 –+.

58…Ke7

58…bxc3 59 Qd4+!? (59 Qxa5?! Rd7 60 Qxc3+ Ke7 –/+) 59…Ke7 60 Nxf7 Qxf7+ 61 b3 =.

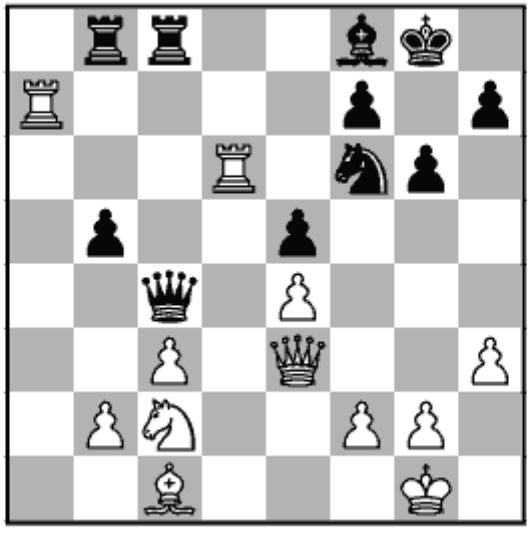
59 Nc6+!

White must avoid a queen-swap before picking up the exchange. Not 59 Nxf7? Qxf7 –+.

59…Kf8 60 Ne5 Qf5 61 Qa8+

Now that the queen has left d5, it is safe to take on f7: **61…** **Kg7 62 Qg2+** = (or 62 Nxf7 =).

back



Solution 327: White to play

Saksham – Prraneeth

Mumbai 2018/19

White wins thanks to a beautiful sacrifice.

22 Rxf6!

In the game White missed his chance, with 22 Rda6? granting him very little advantage.

22…Bc5 23 Qxc5!

The inaccurate 23 Qf3?! Bxa7 24 Nb4 +/– leaves White better, but far from clearly winning.

23…Rxc5

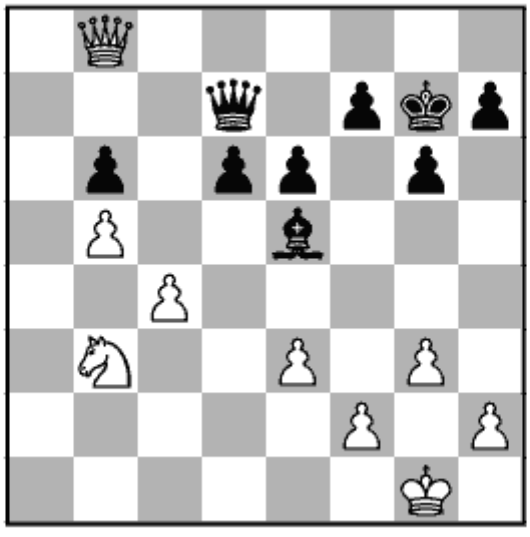
23…Qxc5 24 Rfxf7 +–.

24 Ne3

Black loses the f7-pawn, after which his position is hopeless: **24…Qxe4** (24…Qb3 25 Ra3 +–) **25 Rfxf7 Qb1 26 Kh2** (26 Rg7+!? +–) **26…Qxc1 27 Ng4** with irresistible threats; e.g.,

27…Rc6 (27…Qf4+ 28 Rxf4 exf4 29 Nf6+ +–) **28 Rg7+ Kh8** (28…Kf8 29 Raf7+ Ke8 30 Nxe5 +–) **29 Rxh7+ Kg8 30 Nh6+ +–**.

back



Solution 328: Black to play

Nagarajan – A.Grabinsky

Burlingame 2019

41…Bc3!

In the game Black went astray, playing instead 41…h5?.

42 Qxb6 e5

Black activates his queen and, thanks to the bad knight on b3, is no worse!

43 Qa6

Or:

a) 43 Qc6 Qf5 44 e4 Qf3 45 Qxd6 Qxe4 46 Qd1 Qxc4 is unclear.

b) 43 Nc1 Qf5 44 Qxd6 Qc2 45 Nd3 Qd1+ 46 Kg2 e4 47 b6 Qf3+! = (not 47…Qxd3?! 48 c5 +/–) with perpetual check.

43…Qg4 44 Qa2 Qd1+!?

Or 44…Qxc4 45 Qc2 Qb4! 46 Nc1 Ba1! with unclear play.

45 Kg2 g5

This is not the only move, but is probably the simplest option.

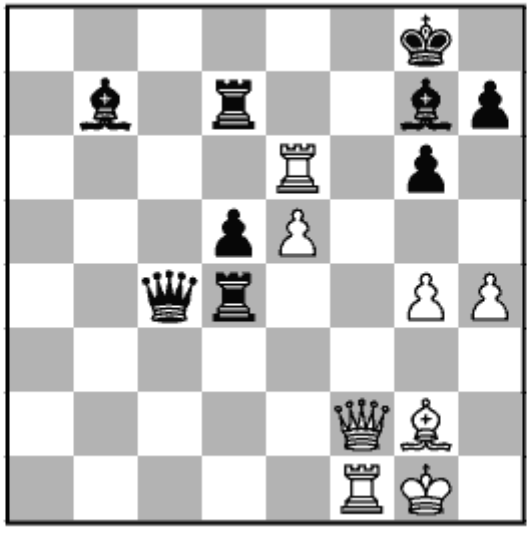
46 b6

46 h3 h5 is unclear.

46…g4 47 Qa8 h5

and White can't strengthen his position: **48 b7** (48 Nc1 can be met by 48…Be1!? = or 48…Bd2 49 Nd3 Bxe3 =) **48…Qf3+ 49 Kf1 Qd1+ =** with perpetual check.

back



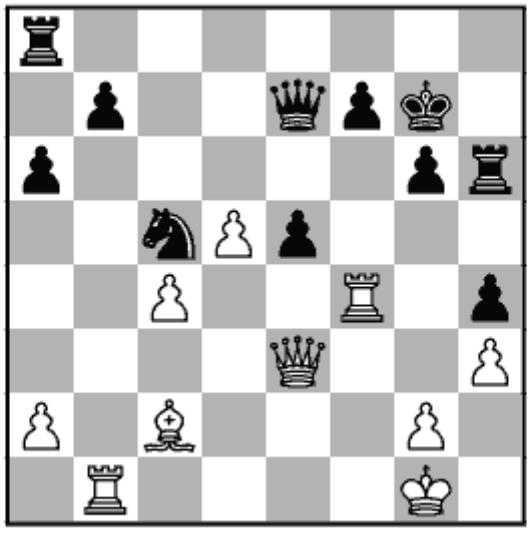
Solution 329: Black to play

Mont Reynaud – Y.Liou (variation)

Burlingame 2019

38…h6! (not 38…h5? 39 gxh5 Rg4 40 hxg6 with unclear play) **39 Rxg6 Qd3!** (Black takes control of the b1-h7 diagonal so that White will not be able to deliver perpetual check; not 39…Rxg4? 40 e6! {40 Qf8+? is premature: 40… Kh7 41 Rxg7+ Rdxg7 42 Qf5+ R4g6 43 h5 Bc8! –+} 40… Rc7 41 Qf8+ Kh7 42 Rxg7+ Rcxg7 {42…Rgxg7 43 Qf5+ Rg6 44 h5 =} 43 Qf5+ R4g6 44 h5 Qd4+ 45 Rf2 with a roughly equal position) **40 e6** (40 Qf5 Rc7! 41 h5 {41 e6 Kh8 –+} 41…Bc8 –+) **40…Rc7** (40…Re7? 41 Qf8+ is unclear) **41 h5 Kh7!** (the only winning move; after 41…Kh8? White survives against all the odds by 42 g5! Rg4 {42…hxg5 43 Rxg7! Rxg7 44 h6! should also end in a draw} 43 Rxg7! Rxg7 44 Qf8+ Kh7 {44…Rg8 45 Qf6+} 45 g6+ R4xg6 46 hxg6+ Qxg6 47 Qf5, with a drawable ending) **42 Qf5** (here 42 g5 hxg5 43 Rxg7+ Rxg7 is no problem for Black) **42…Kh8!** and now White is defenceless.

back



Solution 330: White to play

I.Ke – Hevia

Burlingame 2019

Distracting the queen from its defence of f7 will allow White to strike.

23 d6!

Better than 23 Rbf1?! Rf8 += or the premature 23 Rxf7+?! Qxf7 24 Qxc5 Rf8, with unclear play.

23…Qe6

23…Qxd6 24 Rxf7+ Kxf7 25 Qxh6 +–.

24 Rxf7+!

After 24 Rf2?! Rc8 Black has good chances to resist.

24…Qxf7

We have reached a critical position. White's next move decides the outcome of the game.

25 Qxc5!

After 25 Qxe5+? (as played in the game) 25…Qf6 26 Qxc5 Rh5! Black succeeds in bringing his rook into play, making the game unclear; e.g., 27 Rxb7+ Kh8 with counterplay.

25…Rh5

Or:

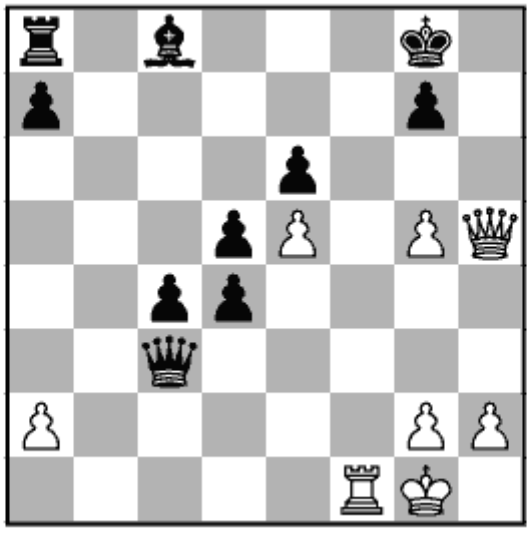
a) 25…Re8 26 Be4 +–.

b) 25…b6 26 Qxe5+ Qf6 27 Qe3 gives White a vital extra tempo in comparison with the 25 Qxe5+? line: 27…Rh5 28 Rxb6 +–.

26 Be4

White has a decisive advantage: **26…Qf4** (26…Rb8 27 Bd5 +–) **27 Bxb7 Rf8 28 d7 +–**.

back



Solution 331: White to play

Kravtsiv – Atabayev (variation)

Dubai 2012

Before playing for mate, White must tend to the safety of his own king.

24 g3!

Not 24 h3? Qe3+ 25 Kh1 Qxe5, when Black will be able to give perpetual check: 26 Qe8+ Kh7 27 Rf8 Qe1+ 28 Kh2 Qe5+ =.

24…Qe3+

Or: 24…Rb8 25 Qe8+ (25 Rf4!? +–) 25…Kh7 26 Rf8 +–; 24…Bd7 25 Qf7+ Kh8 26 g6 Rg8 27 Rf4 Qe3+ 28 Kg2 Qe2+ 29 Kh3 +–.

25 Kg2 Qxe5 26 Rf4!

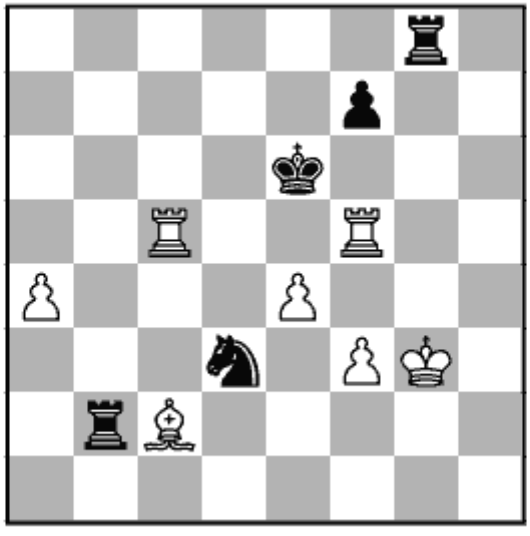
Black now has no checks and can't defend against White's threats either. After 26 Qe8+ Kh7 White has nothing better than retracing his steps since 27 Rf4? allows 27…Qe2+ =.

26…Qxf4 27 gxf4 +–

back

7: Tough Choices

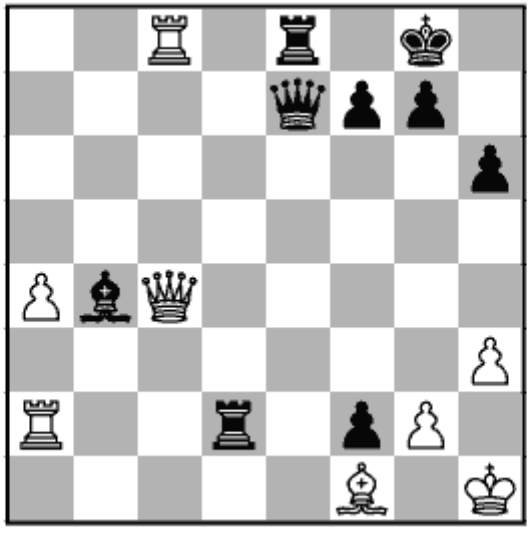
Here is our second selection of positions where you are asked to choose between two moves. But these 33 puzzles are, like the previous chapter, all level 4 or 5! At least try to make an educated guess, and remember that if you can eliminate one of the moves, that is enough to help you choose the other one, even if it looks like a risky step into the unknown. In complex positions, you sometimes just have to ‘go with the flow’, avoiding pitfalls as best you can.



Puzzle 332: White to play

Choose between 56 Kh3 and 56 Kh4.

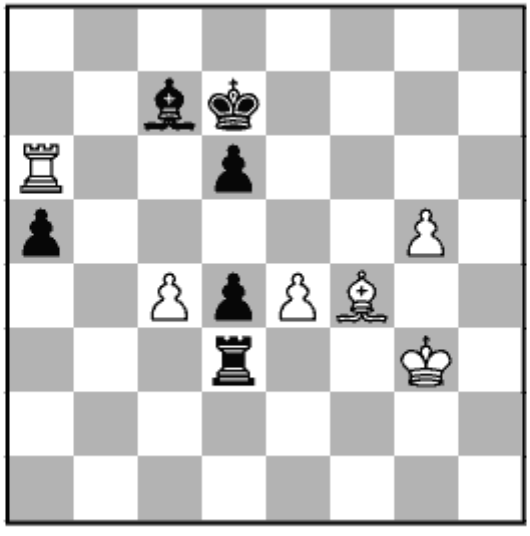
answer



Puzzle 333: Black to play

Choose between 36…Rxc8 and 36…Rxa2.

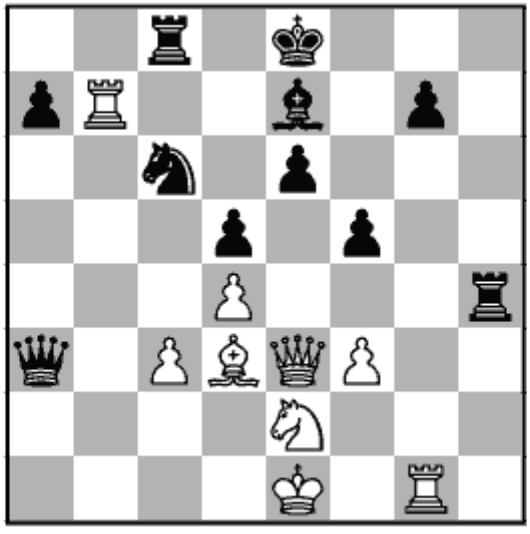
answer



Puzzle 334: White to play

Choose between 52 Kg4 and 52 Kg2.

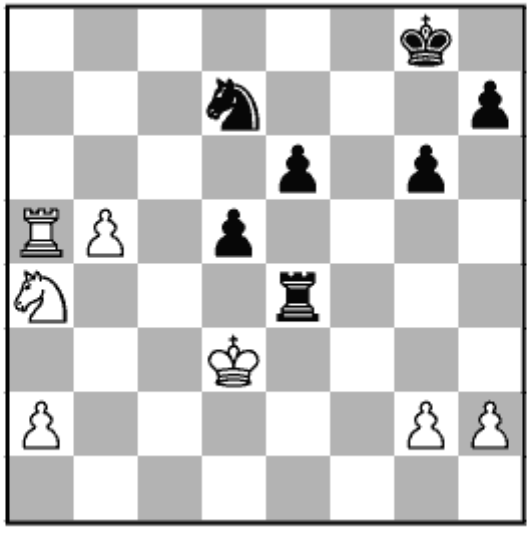
answer



Puzzle 335: Black to play

Choose between 25…Nd8 and 25…Qd6.

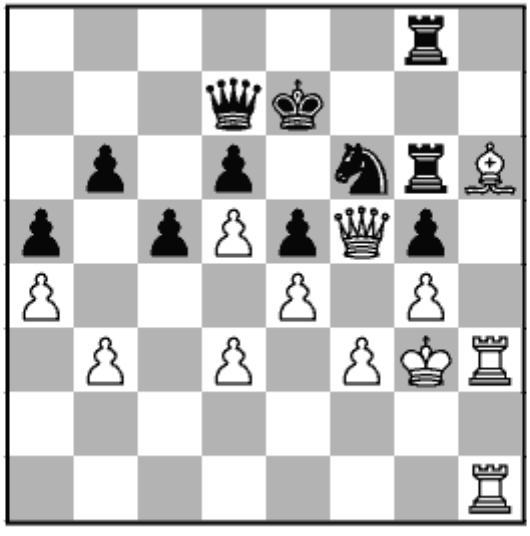
answer



Puzzle 336: White to play

Choose between 35 Ra8+ and 35 Ra7.

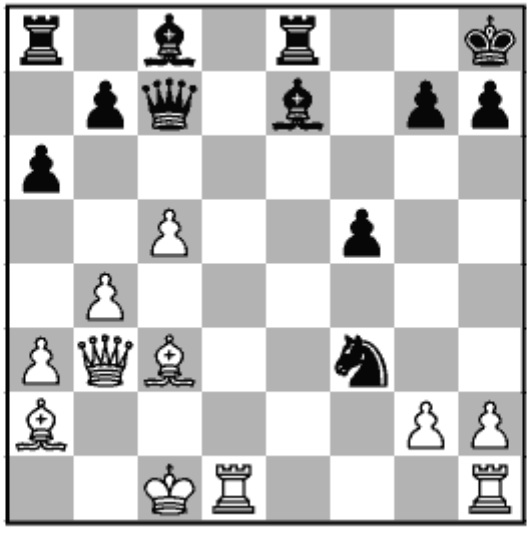
answer



Puzzle 337: Black to play

Choose between 38…Qc8 and 38…Kf7.

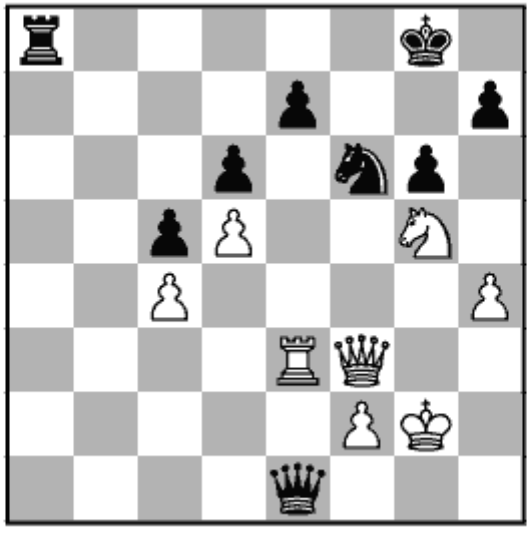
answer



Puzzle 338: White to play

Choose between 24 gxf3 and 24 Bxg7+.

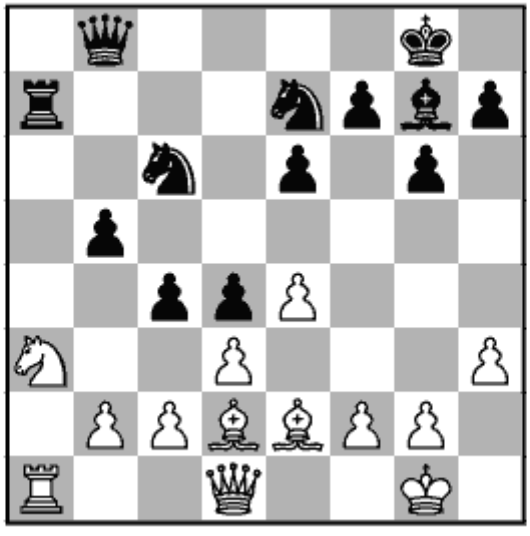
answer



Puzzle 339: Black to play

Choose between 39…Qc1 and 39…Qb1.

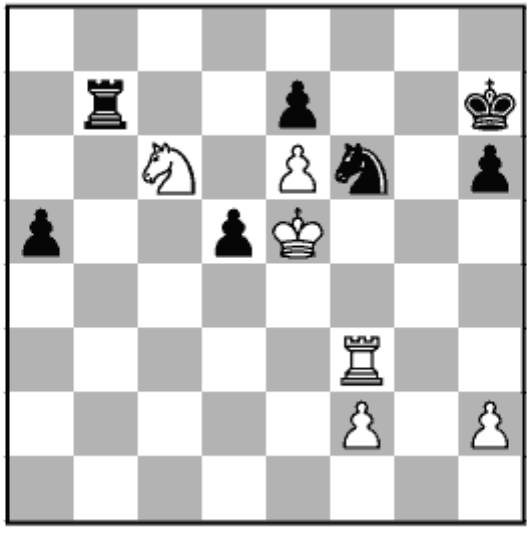
answer



Puzzle 340: White to play

Choose between 22 dxc4 and 22 Rb1.

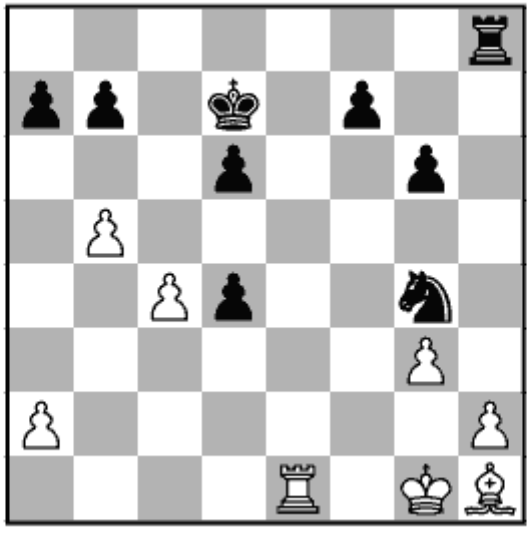
answer



Puzzle 341: Black to play

Choose between 52…Ng4+ and 52…Ng8.

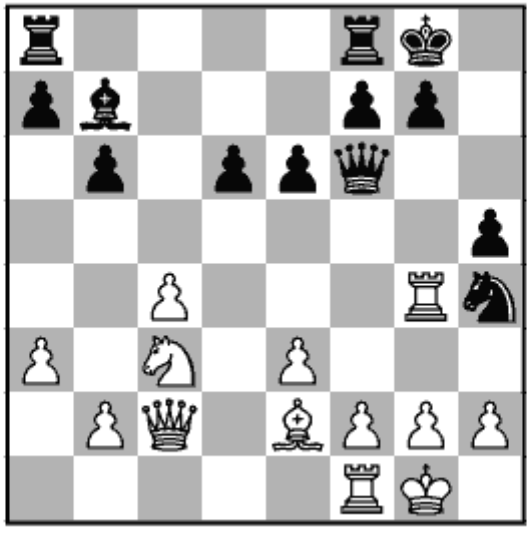
answer



Puzzle 342: White to play

Choose between 27 Bxb7 and 27 Re4.

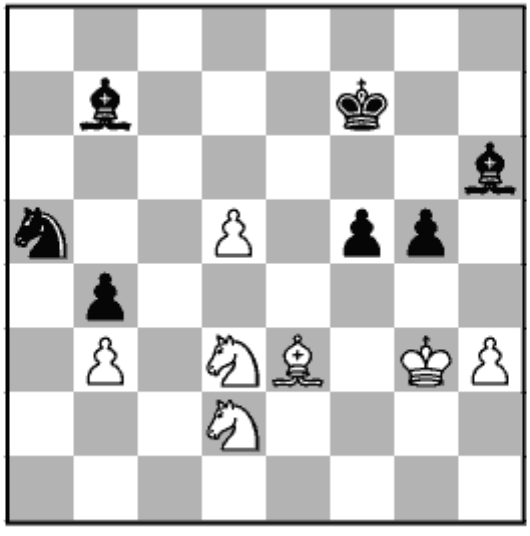
answer



Puzzle 343: White to play

Choose between 19 Rg3 and 19 Rf4.

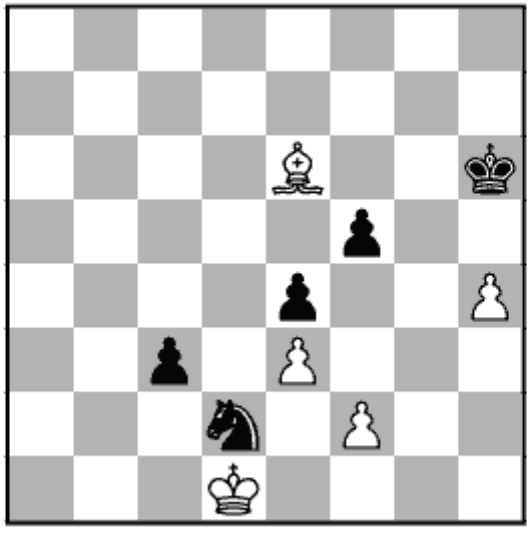
answer



Puzzle 344: Black to play

Choose between 50…f4+ and 50…Bxd5.

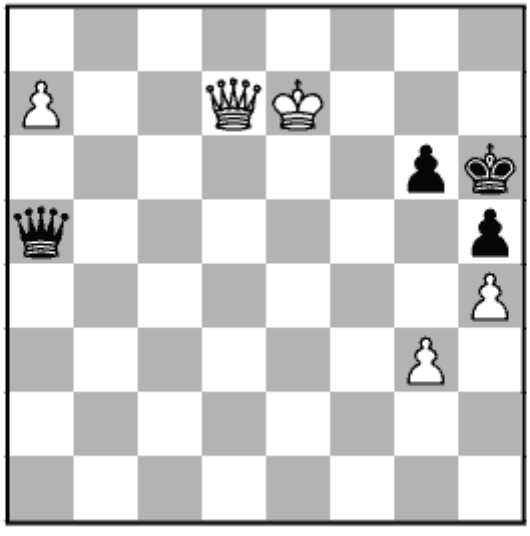
answer



Puzzle 345: Black to play

Choose between 49…Kh5 and 49…Kg6.

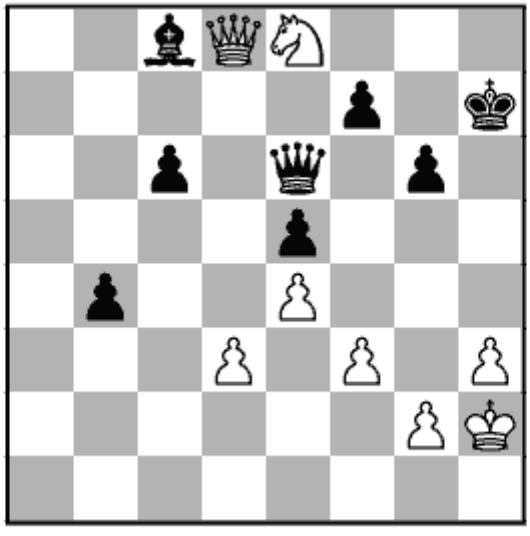
answer



Puzzle 346: Black to play

Choose between 88…Qc5+ and 88…Qb4+.

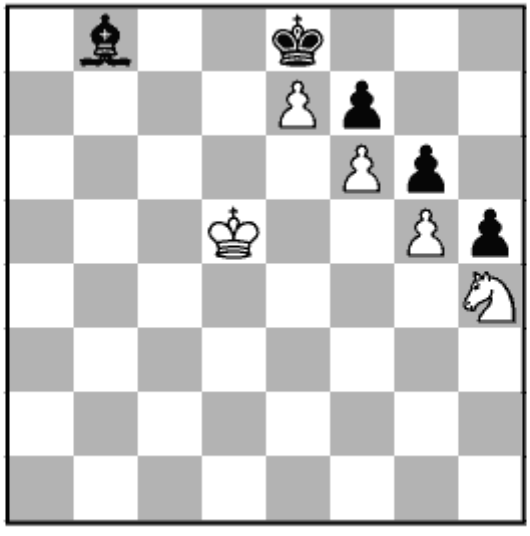
answer



Puzzle 347: White to play

Choose between 41 f4 and 41 d4.

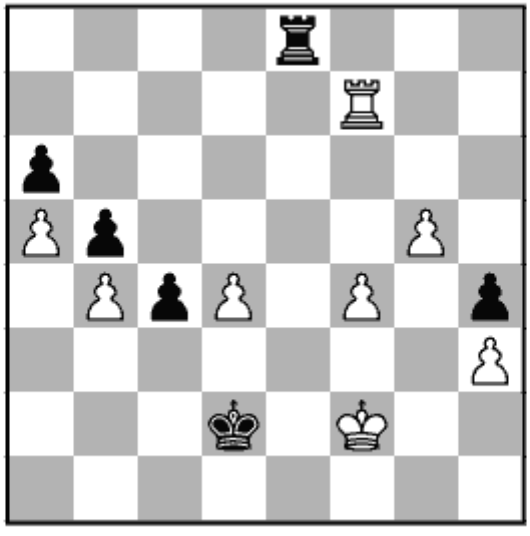
answer



Puzzle 348: Black to play

Choose between 61…Kd7 and 61…Bf4.

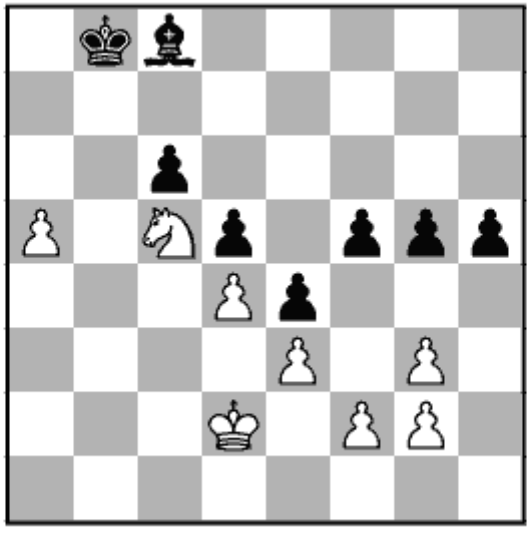
answer



Puzzle 349: White to play

Choose between 59 f5 and 59 g6.

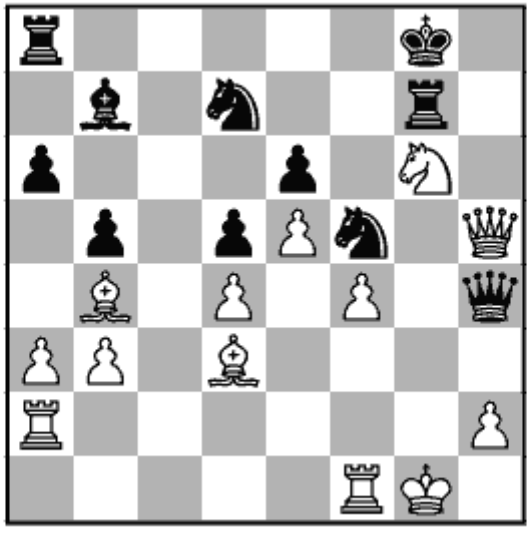
answer



Puzzle 350: Black to play

Choose between 42…g4 and 42…Ka8.

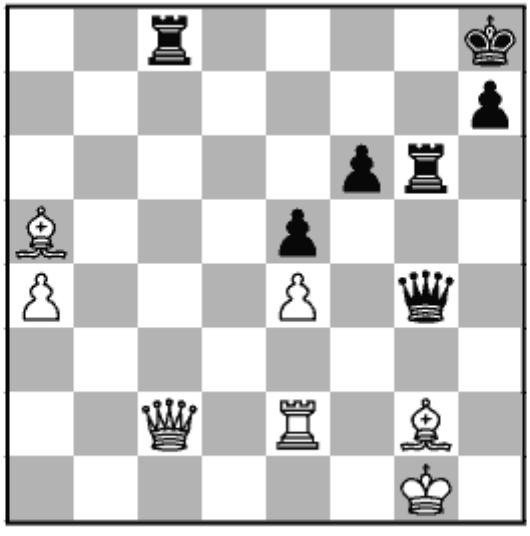
answer



Puzzle 351: White to play

Choose between 26 Qxh4 and 26 Be2.

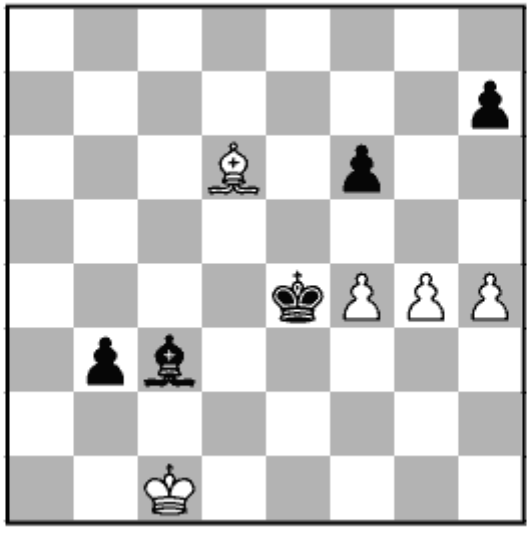
answer



Puzzle 352: White to play

Choose between 52 Qb2 and 52 Qd2.

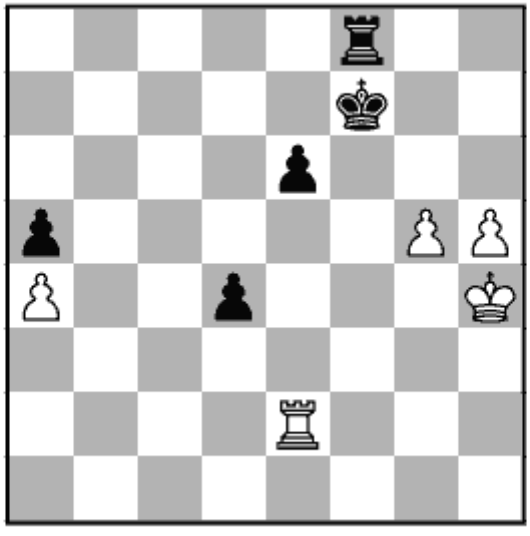
answer



Puzzle 353: Black to play

Choose between 46…Kf3 and 46…Be1.

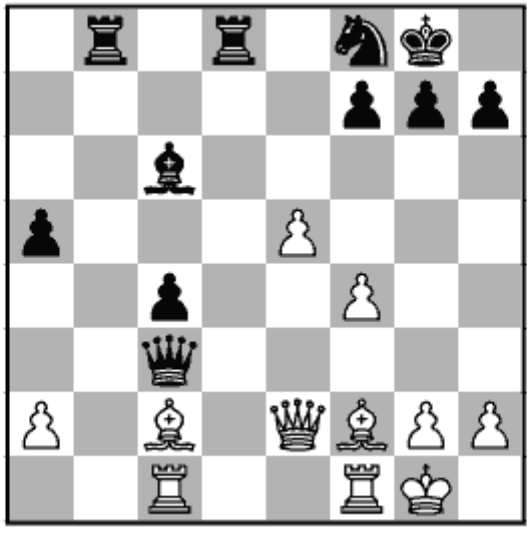
answer



Puzzle 354: White to play

Choose between 50 g6+ and 50 h6.

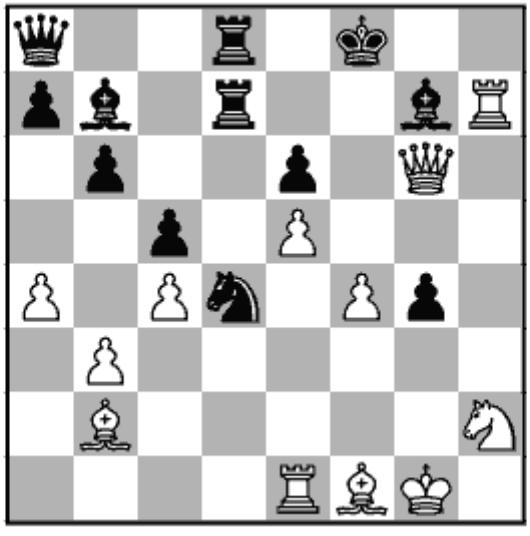
answer



Puzzle 355: Black to play

Choose between 28…Rd2 and 28…Rb2.

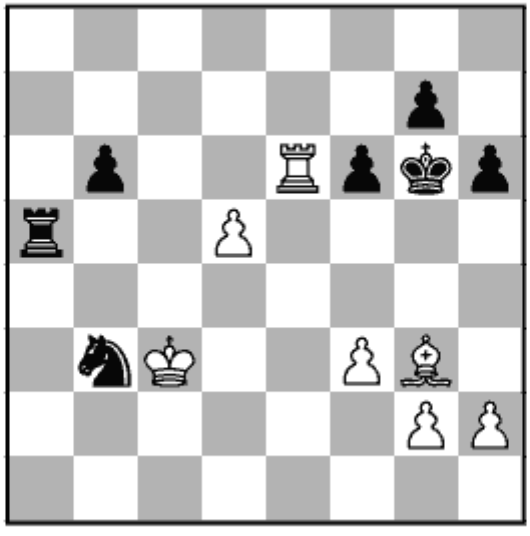
answer



Puzzle 356: Black to play

Choose between 37…Rc7 and 37…Re7.

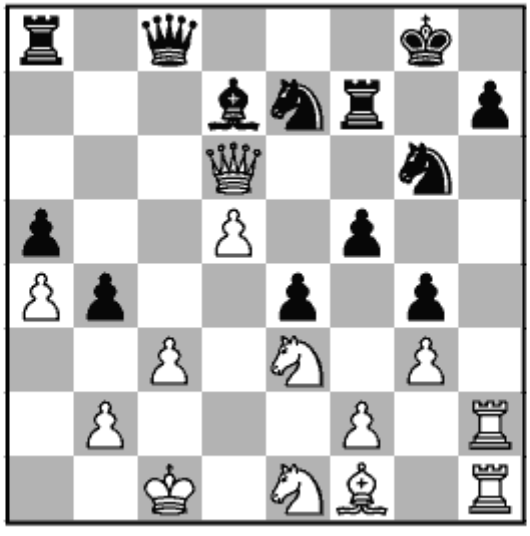
answer



Puzzle 357: Black to play

Choose between 54…Nc5 and 54…Nc1.

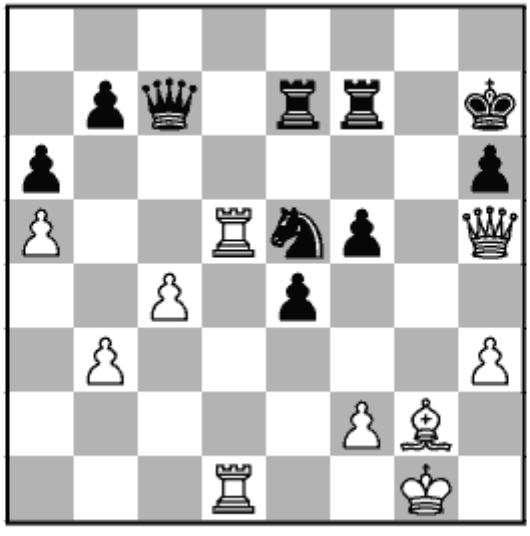
answer



Puzzle 358: White to play

Choose between 28 Bc4 and 28 N1c2.

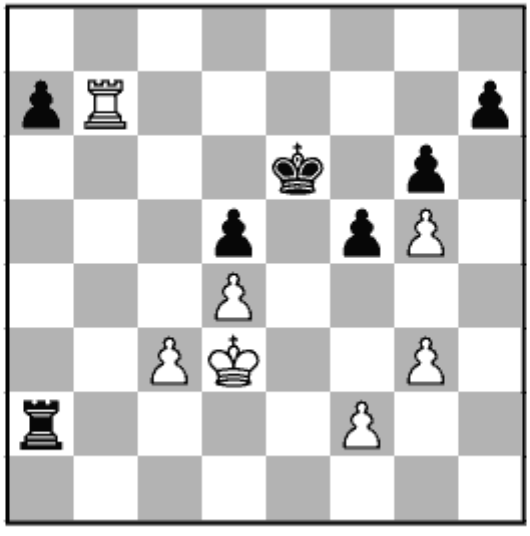
answer



Puzzle 359: Black to play

Choose between 40…Re6 and 40…Rf6.

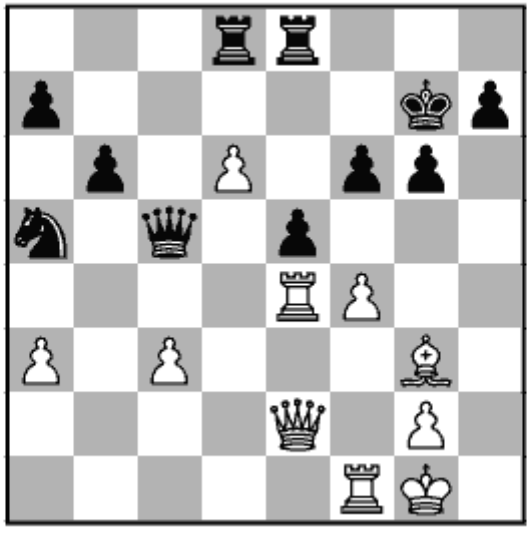
answer



Puzzle 360: White to play

Choose between 41 Rxh7 and 41 Ke3.

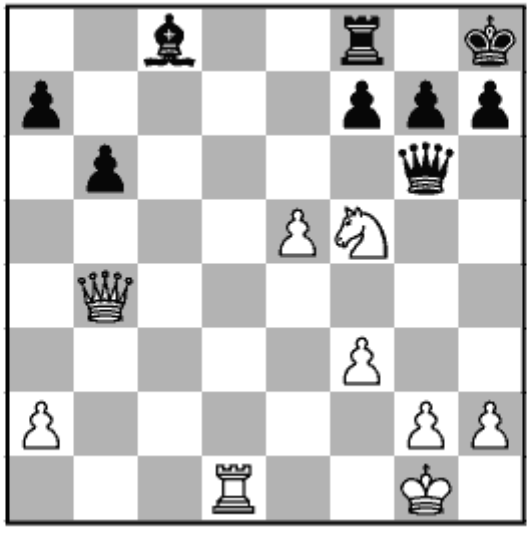
answer



Puzzle 361: White to play

Choose between 29 Kh1 and 29 Bf2.

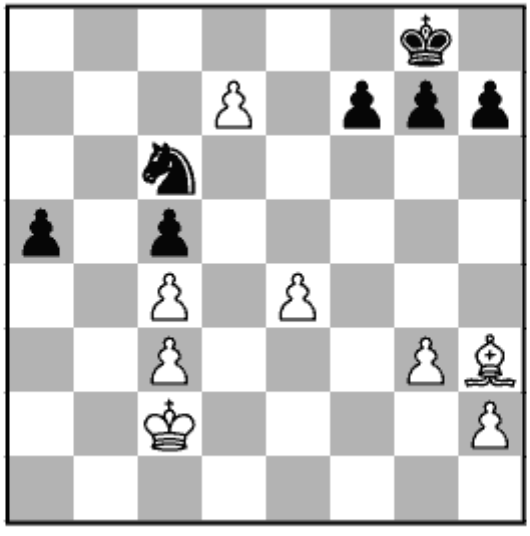
answer



Puzzle 362: Black to play

Choose between 26…Re8 and 26…Rg8.

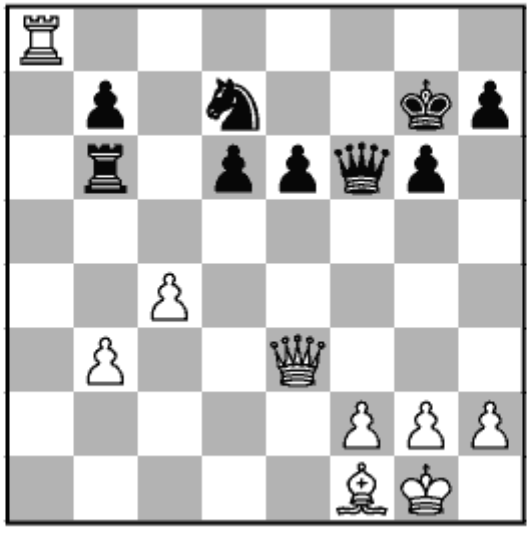
answer



Puzzle 363: White to play

Choose between 44 e5 and 44 Kb3.

answer

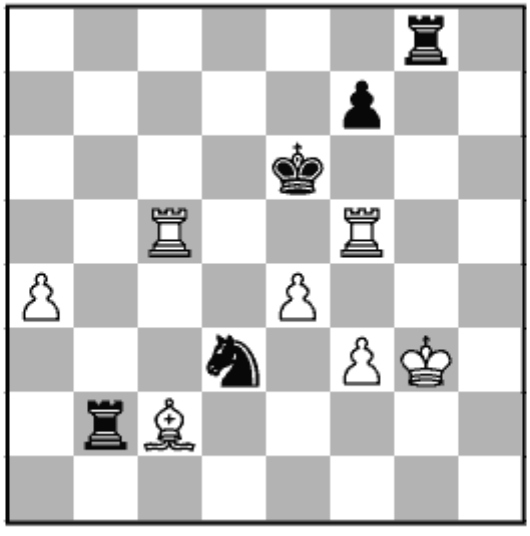


Puzzle 364: Black to play

Choose between 30…Qe5 and 30…Nc5.

answer

Solutions for Chapter 7



Solution 332: White to play

M.Popov – Wu Huanghui

Tianjin 2018/19

It is important to keep control of h2 so that the bishop isn't tied down to the c2-square.

56 Kh3!

The 'active' 56 Kh4? is wrong because of 56…Nxc5 57 Rxc5 Kd6 58 Rd5+ (58 Rc4 Ke5 –+) 58…Kc6 with a decisive advantage. There may follow 59 Rd2 Rg1 60 e5 Rb8 61 Rd6+ Kc5 –+ (as played in the game).

56…Nxc5 57 Rxc5 Kd6 58 Rd5+ Ke7 59 Re5+!

White needs the black king to be on a light square. Not 59 Bd3? Rbg2 –+.

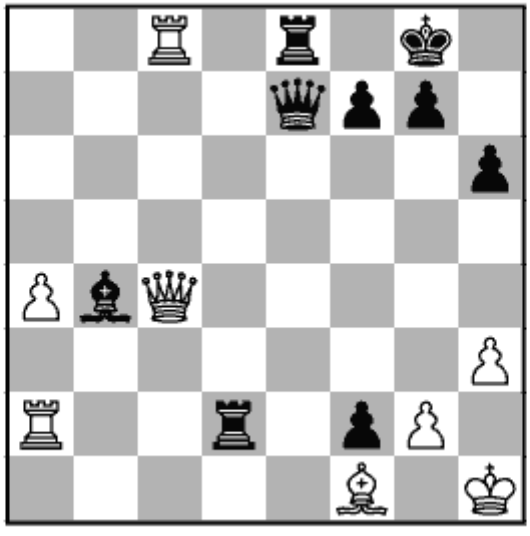
59…Kd6 60 Rd5+ Ke6

Or 60…Kc6 61 Bd3 (with the king on h4, this would allow mate in one) 61…Rbg2 62 Bb5+ Kb6 63 a5+! =.

61 Rc5 Rg1 62 Bd3

and the game should end in a draw.

back



Solution 333: Black to play

Seo Jung – Dhulipalla

Stockholm 2018/19

Opposite-coloured bishops have a stronger drawing tendency the fewer other pieces are on the board with them. So to retain winning chances, Black should only allow the exchange of one set of rooks.

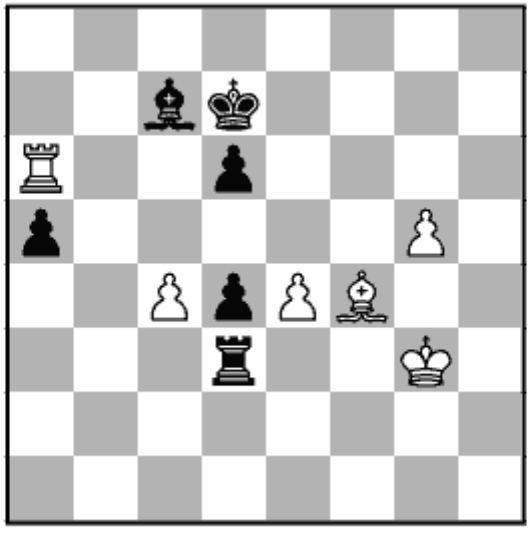
36…Rxc8!

36…Rxa2? 37 Rxe8+ Qxe8 38 Qxa2 Qe1 (38…Bd6 39 Qxf2 Qxa4 is not enough for Black to win) 39 Qe2 (thus far as played in the game) 39…Bd6 40 g4! and White holds the position.

37 Qxc8+ Rd8

With a pair of rooks left too, the extra pawn proves decisive: **38 Qc4 Bc5 39 Re2 Qg5 –+**.

back



Solution 334: White to play

Peng Xiongjian – Maisuradze

Tianjin 2018/19

Usually you'd want to keep the king close to the pawns, but here it is more important to prevent rook checks from behind.

52 Kg2!

52 Kg4? Rd1 53 c5 (53 g6 d3! is equal because after 54 g7 Rg1+ White can't play 55 Bg3? since 55…d2! 56 g8Q d1Q+ promotes with check and the white king will be mated) and now only 53…d3! enables Black to survive:

a) 54 cxd6 Bd8 does not offer White winning chances because of his badly-placed rook on a6. For example: 55 g6 (55 Kf5 Rf1! 56 Ra7+ Kc6 57 Rc7+ Bxc7 58 dxc7 Kd7 is unclear; 55 Ra7+ Ke6 56 Ra8 Rg1+ 57 Kh5 Bxg5!? = was played in the game) 55…d2 56 Bxd2 Rxd2 57 g7 Rg2+ 58 Kf3 Rg1 with a drawn position.

b) After the trickier 54 c6+!? Ke6 55 Ra7 Rg1+ 56 Kh3 (56 Kh5 Rf1! =) 56…Rh1+ 57 Kg2 Rh7 Black can also resist.

52…Rb3

52…Rd1 53 g6 d3 54 g7 d2 55 g8Q Rg1+ 56 Kxg1 d1Q+ 57 Kh2 +– and the king easily escapes the checks.

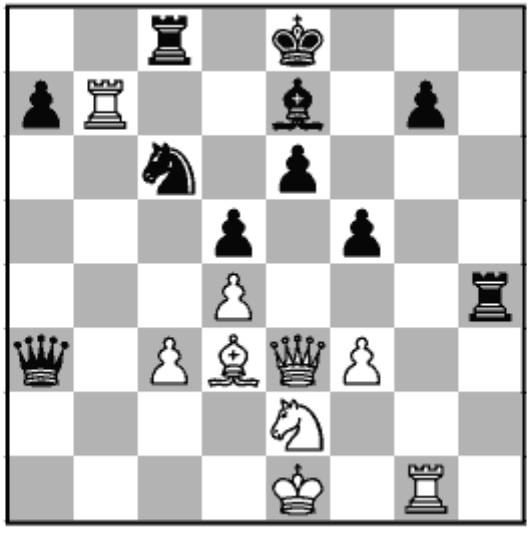
53 c5

After 53 g6 Rb8 White needs to play precisely to preserve the win, but 53 Ra7!? +– is also a good option.

53…d3 54 Kf3 d2+ 55 Ke2 +–

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 335: Black to play

Kravtsiv – A.L'Ami

Roosendaal 2012

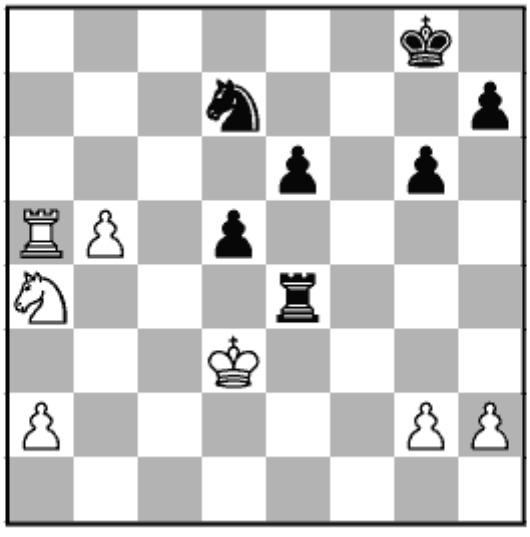
25…Qd6!

Retreating the knight with 25…Nd8? is wrong because it weakens the defence of the king and the e7-bishop in particular, allowing 26 Rxg7! Rh1+ (26…Nxb7 27 Qxe6 +–) 27 Kf2 Nxb7 28 Qxe6, when the exposed black king proves fatal: 28…Kd8 29 Bxf5 Rc7 30 Qxd5+ (in the game Black resigned here) 30…Nd6 31 Rg8+ +–.

26 Rxg7 Rb8

with an unclear position.

back



Solution 336: White to play

Kravtsiv – R.Castellanos

Livigno 2012

White shouldn't let the black king escape from its back rank.

35 Ra7!

After 35 Ra8+? Kf7 36 Ra7 (as played in the game) 36… Rxa4! (36…Ke8? 37 Rxd7 Rxa4 38 Rxh7 +–) 37 Rxd7+ Kf6 the king has become active and the black rook can deal with the b-pawn: 38 b6 Rxa2 39 Kc3 Ra6 40 b7 Rb6 =.

35…Ne5+

Now 35…Rxa4 36 Rxd7 +– is a different matter entirely since a check on the eighth rank will speed the pawn towards promotion: 36…Rb4 37 a4 Rxa4 38 b6 Rb4 39 b7 +–.

36 Kc3! d4+ 37 Kd2 d3 38 Nc3!?

Slightly weaker is 38 b6 Re2+.

38…Rd4

38…Rb4 39 a4 gives White a decisive advantage. Black then gains nothing from 39…Rb2+ 40 Ke3 +–.

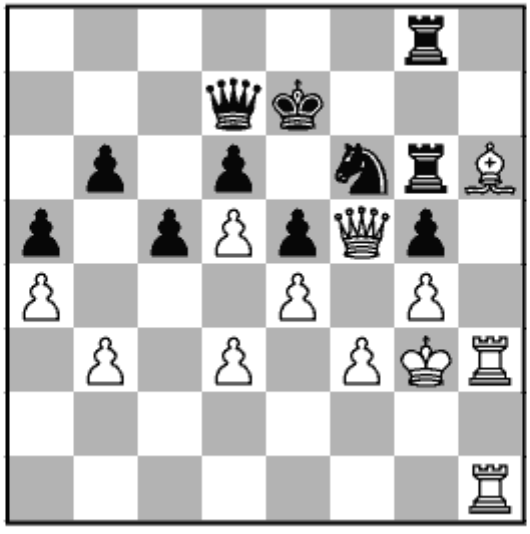
39 Ra4

39 Rc7!? +–.

39…Nc4+ 40 Rxc4 Rxc4 41 a4 +–

White's pawns are unstoppable.

back



Solution 337: Black to play

Sandu – Ramondino

Stockholm 2018/19

Black is close to being in zugzwang, and must be careful not to allow White's main active ideas, Rh5 to break into the kingside, or d4 smashing through the centre. In fact, he can only safely move his king here.

38…Kf7

38…Ke8 is the only other playable move. The problem with 38…Qc8? (as played in the game) is that after 39 Rh5! the queen being on c8 does not allow Black to remove his king from e7:

a) 39…Kf7 40 Rxg5 Rxg5 41 Qxc8 +–.

b) 39…Nxh5+ 40 Rxh5 Qd7 (40…Qxf5 41 exf5 +–) 41 Bxg5+ Ke8 42 Bh4 +–.

c) 39…Qd7 40 Rxg5! Rxg5 41 Qxg5! Rxg5 42 Bxg5 +– with a decisive advantage.

39 Rh5 Ke8!

The key point is that after the bishop takes on g5, there will be no pin.

40 R5h2

40 Rxg5 Rxg5 41 Bxg5 Qxf5 and with an extra knight, Black will be no worse.

40…Kf7 =

White lacks any promising way to break through Black's defences.

back

Solution 338: White to play

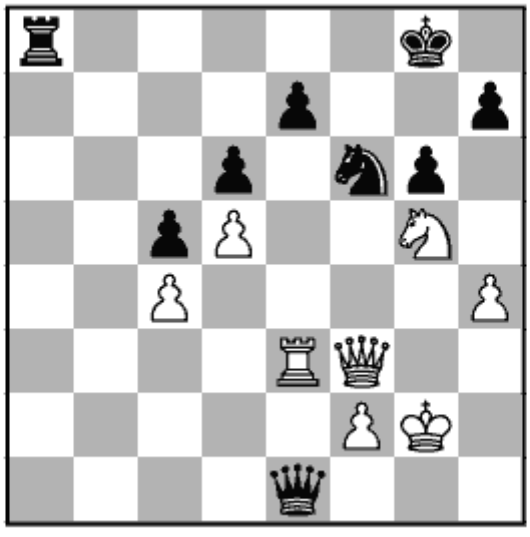
Sandipan – Shyam

Mumbai 2018/19

In the game, White felt he had a sacrificial mating attack, but the black king managed to squirm its way out: 24 Bxg7+? Kxg7 25 Qf7+ Kh6 26 Rd6+ and it all looks very promising, but the question is whether White has a mate. In fact, he doesn't even have a perpetual. 26…Bxd6 27 Qf6+ Kh5 28 Bf7+ (28 gxf3 Bf4+ –+) 28…Kg4 29 gxf3+ (29 Qg7+!? Ng5 30 h3+ Kf4! 31 Rf1+ Kg3 32 Qxg5+ Kh2 –+) 29…Kh3! –+. It's rare that a king can safely move so far up the board in the middlegame, but White is running out of pieces, and those he has are not placed to cover all the squares they need to. 30 Bc4 (30 Qh6+ Kg2 –+; 30 Rg1 Bf4+ 31 Kb1 Qe5 –+) 30…Kg2 –+ was played in the game.

White should settle for the less ambitious **24 gxf3 Bg5+ 25 Kb1 Be6** with a playable position, and roughly equal chances.

back



Solution 339: Black to play

Sarwat – Kishor

Mumbai 2018/19

To have any real chance of salvation, Black needs to support his queen with 40…Ra1 (so 39…Qa1?, as in the game, makes no sense), but only one square for the queen works.

39…Qc1!

39…Qb1? 40 Rxe7 Ra1 (40…Qf5 41 Qxf5 gxf5 42 Re6 +– with a decisive advantage; 40…Rf8 41 Qe3 Qf5 42 Qe6+ +–) 41 Re8+ Kg7 42 Ne6+ +– and Black loses because his queen does not control the c1-h6 diagonal.

40 Rxe7 Ra1!

40…Rf8? loses to 41 Ne6 +–.

41 Re8+

After 41 Qxf6 Black can secure a draw by 41…Qh1+ 42 Kg3 Rg1+ (42…Qg1+!? =) 43 Kf4 Qxh4+ 44 Ke3 Qxg5+ =.

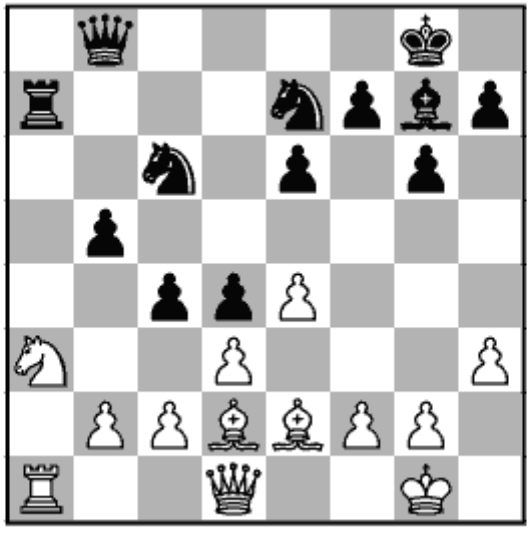
41…Kg7 42 Re7+

Not 42 Ne6+? Kh6 –+.

42…Kg8 =

with perpetual check.

back



Solution 340: White to play

Ampie – Swiercz

Burlingame 2019

After taking on c4, White will be forced to give up the exchange, but this turns out to be a very good option.

22 dxc4!

22 Rb1? c3 23 Bc1 gives White a difficult position after both 23…b4 –/+ and 23…Rb7 –/+, as played in the game.

22…d3 23 Bxd3 Bxb2 24 cxb5!

With two good pawns for the exchange, White can be happy.

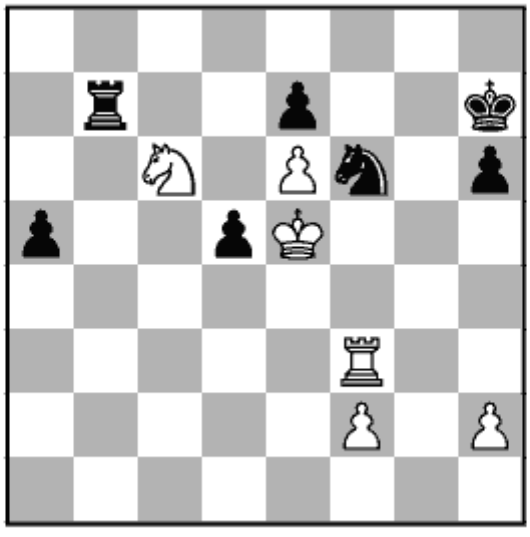
24…Ne5

24…Bxa1 25 Qxa1 +/–.

25 Bb4 Bxa1 26 Qxa1 +/–

with a large advantage.

back



Solution 341: Black to play

Korley – Mont Reynaud

Burlingame 2019

If the knight drops back to g8, then White has no need to spend time taking the d5-pawn and can get on with more important tasks.

52…Ng4+!

52…Ng8? is met not by 53 Kxd5? (as played in the game) 53…a4 =, but 53 Rf7+ Kg6 54 f4!, advancing his pawns rapidly. For example: 54…a4 (54…Rc7 55 f5+ Kh5 56 Nxe7! +–) 55 f5+ Kh5 56 Rf8! Nf6 57 Nxe7 Ng4+ 58 Kd6 +– with an easy win.

53 Kxd5 Kg6!

Now if White goes after the e7-pawn, the black king will reach f5. Not 53…Nf6+? 54 Rxf6 exf6 55 e7 +–.

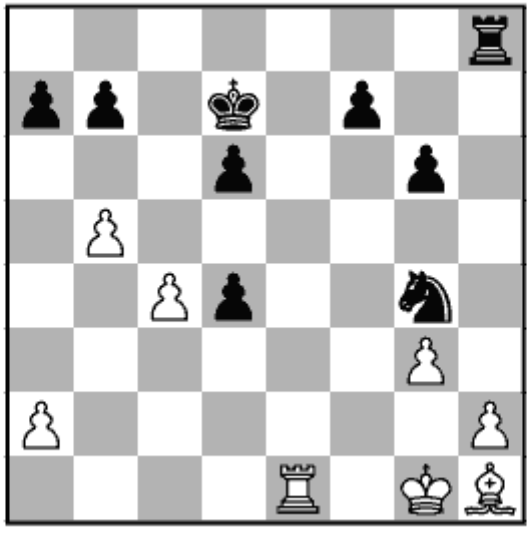
54 Rf7 Nf6+ 55 Ke5

55 Kd4 Kf5 =.

55…Rb5+ 56 Kd4 Kf5 57 Rxe7 a4

with an equal position.

back



Solution 342: White to play

Sučikova – Chizhikov

Stockholm 2018/19

If White grabs the b7-pawn, the e1-rook will be shut out of the game.

27 Re4!

After 27 Bxb7? Ne3 (as played in the game) the knight on e3 is too strong, and White will not be able to attack the d4-pawn in time. 28 Bd5 (28 a4 Kc7 29 Bd5 Kb6 –/+) 28…Kc7! (28…f5? is met by 29 a4! =, to cut the king off after 29…Kc7 30 a5) 29 Bxf7 (29 h4 Nxd5 30 cxd5 Kb6 will be a very unpleasant rook ending for White) 29…g5 30 a4 Kb6 –/+ and after the king reaches c5 White will be on the verge of defeat.

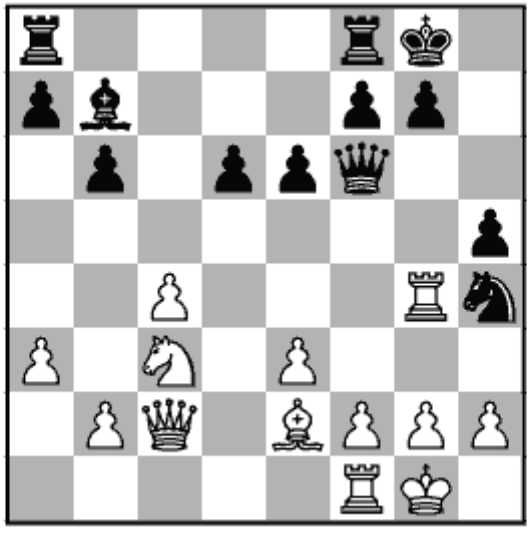
27…f5

27…Ne5 28 Rxd4 b6 =.

28 Rxd4 Rxh2 29 c5! Rxa2 30 Rxd6+ Kc7 31 Rxg6

with an equal position.

back



Solution 343: White to play

R.Wu – Ampie

Burlingame 2019

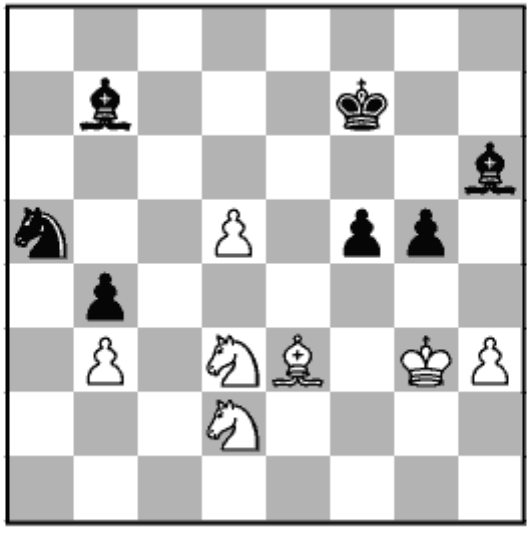
19 Rf4

19 Rg3? allows Black to carry out a combination: 19…Nf5 20 Rh3 (slightly better is 20 Bxh5!? Nxg3 –/+) 20…Bxg2! 21 Ne4 (21 Kxg2 Qg6+ 22 Kh1 Ng3+ –+) 21…Bxe4 22 Qxe4 (thus far as played in the game) 22…g6 –+ with a decisive advantage.

19…Nf5 20 Bf3

with a slight advantage for White.

back



Solution 344: Black to play

R.Shah – Rebut (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

To decide correctly, we need to calculate the consequences of 50…f4+ accurately.

50…Bxd5!

After 50…f4+? 51 Nxf4 gxf4+ 52 Bxf4 Bxf4+ (52…Bg7 53 Bc7 Bc3 54 Ne4 =) 53 Kxf4 Bxd5 54 Ke5! Bxb3 55 Kd4 Black can't protect his b-pawn, so White is saved: 55…Be6 56 Kc5 b3 57 Kb4 Nc6+ 58 Kc3 =.

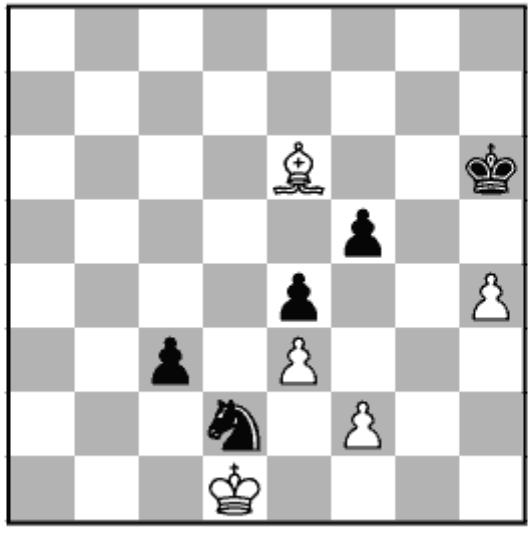
51 Kf2

51 Nxb4 f4+ –+.

51…Nc6

Black is close to victory.

back



Solution 345: Black to play

Kavutskiy – Somalwar

Burlingame 2019

49…Kg6

After 49…Kh5? (played in the game) 50 Bxf5 Kxh4 51 Kc2 Kg5 White must avoid 52 Kxc3?? Nb1+ 53 Kb2 Kxf5 54 Kxb1 Kg4 –+, but after the correct 52 Bh7! the problem for Black is that he loses not just the c3-pawn, but the one on e4 too: 52…Kh6 53 Kxc3 Nb1+ 54 Kb2 Nd2 55 Kc2 +–.

50 Kc2 Nf3

50…Kf6!? 51 Bc8 Nf3 52 h5 Nh4 also survives.

51 h5+

Giving Black an opportunity to make a fatal mistake.

51…Kf6!

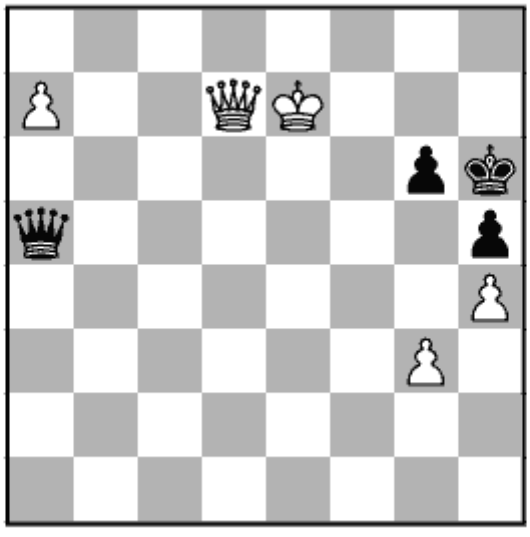
Carefully sidestepping 51…Kg5? 52 h6 +– and 51…Kxh5? 52 Bxf5 Ng5 53 Kxc3 +–.

52 Bc8

52 h6 Nh4! =.

52…Nh4 53 Kxc3 Kg5 =

back



Solution 346: Black to play

Mazé – R.Raja

Stockholm 2018/19

Black must be alert to the fact that the g3-pawn rules out checks on f4.

88…Qb4+!

The game featured 88…Qc5+? 89 Kf7 Qc4+ 90 Kf8 Qc5+ (90…Qb4+ 91 Kg8 Qc4+ 92 Qf7 +–) 91 Kg8 Qc4+ 92 Qf7 +–, winning. After the stalemate joke 92…Qe6!? 93 a8Q, Black resigned.

89 Kf7

Or 89 Kd8 Qf8+ 90 Kc7 Qc5+ 91 Kb8 Qb4+ with perpetual check after 92 Ka8 (or 92 Qb7 Qd6+ 93 Qc7 Qb4+) 92… Qe4+ 93 Kb8 Qb4+ =.

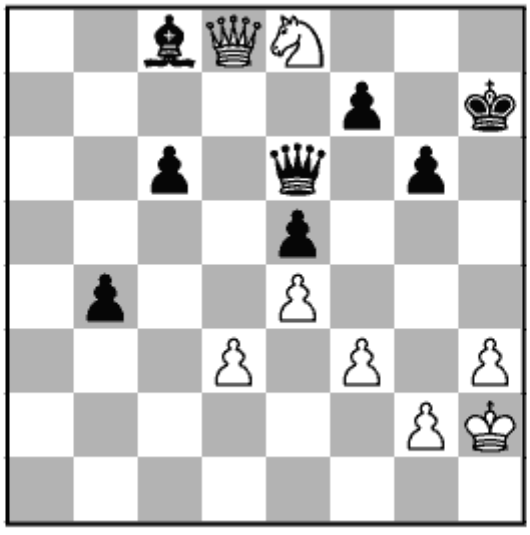
89…Qb3+!

89…Qc4+? transposes to the 88…Qc5+? line.

90 Kf8 Qf3+

and Black saves his skin by checking: **91 Ke8** (91 Ke7 Qe4+ 92 Kd8 Qa8+ =) **91…Qa8+ 92 Ke7 Qe4+ =**.

back



Solution 347: White to play

Sugden – Pitschka (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

Setting aside White's options of repeating moves by 41 Qh4+ Kg8 42 Qd8 or 41 Nf6+ Kg7 42 Ne8+, there is only one path to victory.

41 d4!

After 41 f4? exf4 (41…b3? 42 d4 +–) 42 d4 Qb3! Black is OK thanks to the threat of perpetual check: 43 Qh4+ Kg8 44 Qxf4 Qe6 =.

41…b3

41…exd4 42 f4 b3 43 Nf6+ Kg7 44 e5 +–.

42 f4! b2 43 Nf6+ Qxf6

Or 43…Kg7 44 dxe5 +– with mate in a few moves.

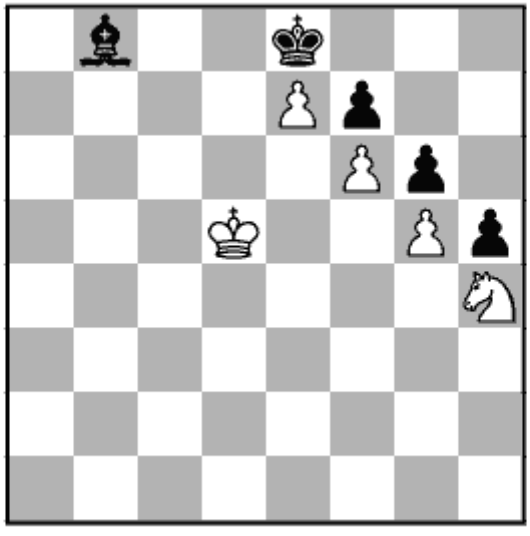
44 Qxf6 b1Q

44…Be6!? is more stubborn, but White wins after 45 Qh4+ (45 d5!? b1Q 46 dxe6 +–) 45…Kg7 (45…Kg8 46 Qd8+ Kh7 47 Qb8 +–) 46 f5 gxf5 (46…b1Q 47 f6+ Kg8 48 Qh6 +–) 47 Qg3+ Kh7 48 Qe1 Ba2 49 d5! +–.

45 Qxf7+ Kh6 46 Qf8+ +–

with an easy win.

back



Solution 348: Black to play

Krishna Teja – Hammarström

Stockholm 2018/19

In the game, Black chose to attack the white pawns with the bishop move, but this loses due to a sneaky tactic.

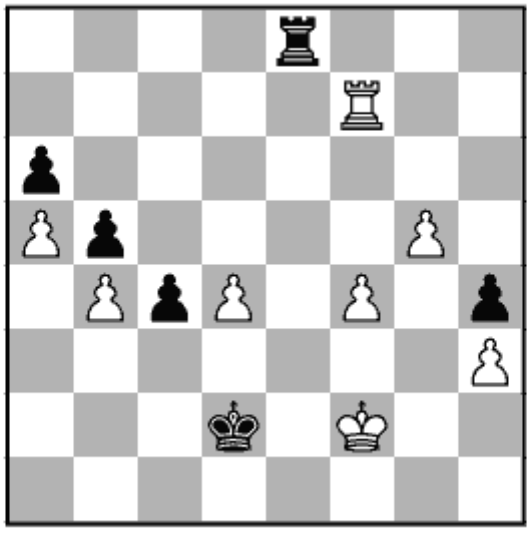
61…Kd7!

Correctly freeing the king from its cage. The game ended 61… Bf4? 62 Nf5!! (62 Nxg6? Bxg5 =) 62…gxf5 63 g6 (White either mates or promotes) 63…fxg6 (63…Bg5 64 g7 +–) 64 Ke6 g5 65 f7# (1-0).

62 Nf3 Bf4 =

with an equal position.

back



Solution 349: White to play

Siva – Nikhil

Mumbai 2018/19

White should not hastily push his pawn to g7, as it will be left stranded without the support of the f-pawn.

59 f5!

After 59 g6? c3 60 Rc7 c2 it is obvious that White has gone wrong, though he can still save the game:

a) Not 61 g7? Rg8! –+.

b) 61 Kf3? Re3+ 62 Kf2 (62 Kg4 Rc3 –+) 62…Rxh3 –+, as played in the game, is also hopeless for White.

c) 61 Rxc2+ Kxc2 62 Kf3 Kd3 is unclear.

d) 61 f5 Re2+ (61…Rf8!? 62 Kf3 =) 62 Kf1 (62 Kf3?! Re3+ –/+) 62…Re1+ 63 Kf2 = with a repetition of moves.

59…c3

Or 59…Rc8 60 f6 c3 61 Re7 c2 62 Re2+ Kd3 63 Rxc2 +–.

60 Rc7

Not 60 f6? Rg8 =.

60…c2

60…Rg8 61 g6 Rf8 62 Rc5 (62 Kf3!? Rxf5+ 63 Kg4 +–) 62… c2 63 g7 c1Q 64 gxf8Q +–.

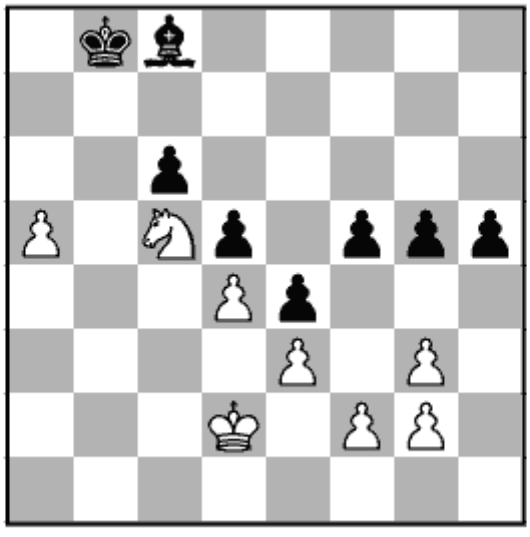
61 f6

White can also play 61 Rxc2+!? Kxc2 62 f6 Rf8 63 Ke3 +–, when his pawns are unstoppable.

61…Re2+ 62 Kf3 Re3+ 63 Kg4 Rc3 64 Rxc3 Kxc3 65 f7 c1Q 66 f8Q +–

With the b4-pawn defended, Black has no counterplay and therefore no hope of salvation.

back



Solution 350: Black to play

Lugovskoi – Harshavardhan

Mumbai 2018/19

A strategic exercise. Black must understand whether he needs to prevent 43 f3 or if he should leave the kingside pawns as they are.

42…Ka8!

After 42…g4? (as played in the game) 43 Kc3 +– it becomes clear that Black has not just given up the f4-square, but also squandered his tempo move with the g-pawn. Black's position is hopeless:

a) 43…Ka8 44 Kb4 Kb8 (44…Ka7 45 Na4 Ba6 46 Kc5 +–) 45 a6!? Ka8 46 Nb3! Bxa6 47 Kc5 +–.

b) 43…Ka7 44 Kb4 Kb8 45 a6 Ka8 46 Nb3! Bxa6 47 Kc5 +–. If the pawn were still on g5, Black would play 47…Bf1, take on g2 and push his h-pawn.

43 Kc3

The exchange of pawns with 43 f3 exf3 44 gxf3 Ka7 = gives White nothing.

43…Kb8 44 Kb4 Ka7 45 Na4

45 Ka4 Kb8 46 a6 Ka8 =.

45…Ba6 46 Nc5

No better is 46 Kc5 Bf1 with unclear play.

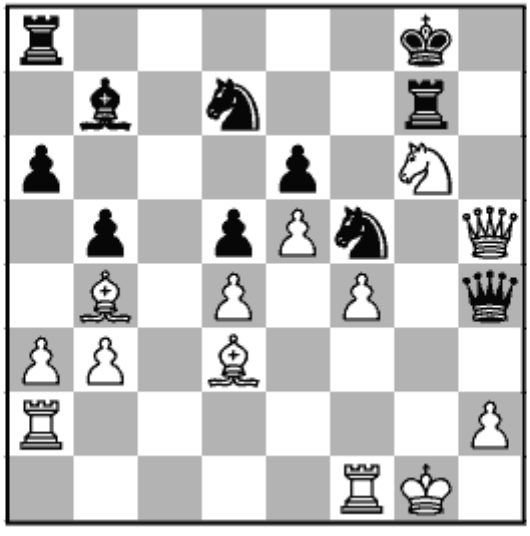
46…Bc8!

46…Bf1? loses to 47 Ne6 +–.

47 Ka4 Kb8 48 a6 Ka8 =

White can’t strengthen his position.

back



Solution 351: White to play

Ratnesan – Sumit

Hastings 2018/19

With the correct follow-up by both sides, one of these moves wins and the other loses.

26 Qxh4

26 Be2? Nf8! (26…Qxh5? 27 Bxh5 += was played in the game; 26…Kf7?! 27 Qxh4 Nxh4 28 Bh5 is unclear) 27 Bxf8 Rxf8 and White cannot support the knight on g6. 28 Rc2 (28 Kh1 Ng3+ –+) 28…Qxh5 29 Bxh5 Nh4 –+.

26…Nxh4 27 Be7!

White wins thanks to the bishop's successful transfer to f6. Not 27 Rg2? Nxg2 28 Kxg2 Kh7, when Black is no worse.

27…Nxg6 28 Bf6 Nxf6

28…Ngxe5+ 29 Bxg7 Nxd3 30 Bh6 +–.

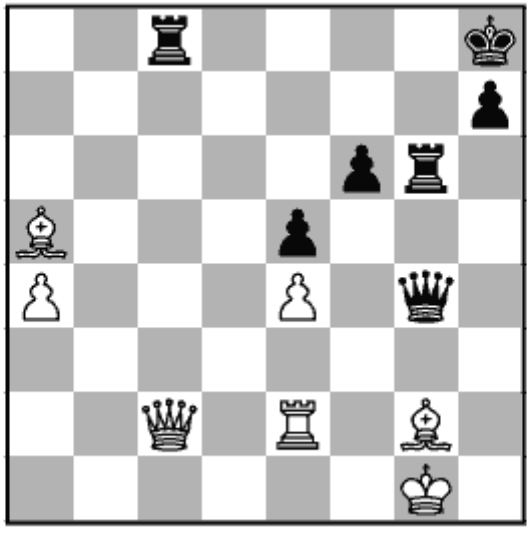
29 exf6 Rf7

29…Nxf4+ 30 fxg7 Nxd3 31 Rd2 +–.

30 Bxg6 Rxf6 31 Rg2 +–

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 352: White to play

Šafranska – Nayem

Mumbai 2018/19

Covering f4 is a priority here, so d2 is the correct square.

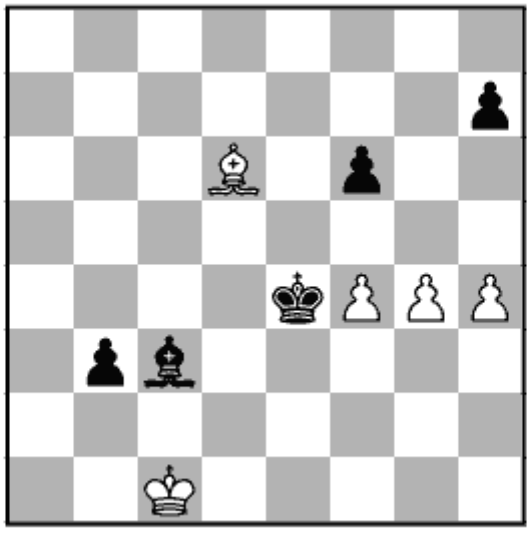
52 Qd2!

52 Qb2?, as played in the game, is bad due to 52…h5! 53 Kf1 (it is too late to play 53 Qd2 h4 54 Qe3 h3 –+; 53 Kh1 h4 54 Re3 Rcg8 –+) 53…Qf4+ 54 Rf2 Rc1+ 55 Be1 (55 Ke2 Rxg2 56 Rxg2 Qxe4+ –+) 55…Rxg2! 56 Kxg2 (56 Qb8+ Rg8 –+) 56…Qxe4+ –+ with an easy win.

52…h5 53 Kf1 h4 54 Qe3

with an unclear position.

back



Solution 353: Black to play

Nikhil – Konguvel (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

This is liable to reach a bishop and wrong rook's pawn ending. The main thing is to calculate whether the white king will be in time to get in front of the black h-pawn.

46…Kf3!

46…Be1? fails to win because after 47 h5 Bg3 48 g5! fxg5 49 fxg5 Bxd6 50 Kb2 Be5+ 51 Kxb3 =, while Black is rounding up the white pawns, White's king will walk over to h1.

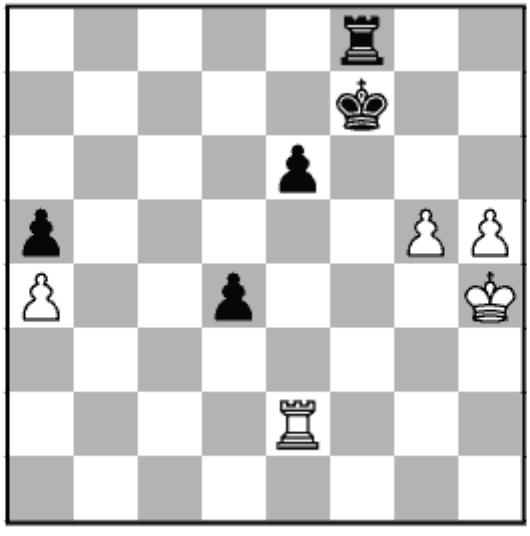
47 g5 Kg4! 48 gxf6

48 Be7 f5 –+.

48…Bxf6 49 Be5 Bxh4 50 Kb2 Bg3 51 Kxb3 Bxf4 52 Bf6 Bg5! –+

White is short of one vital tempo to salvage the draw: **53 Be5** (53 Bxg5 Kxg5 54 Kc2 Kf4 –+) **53…h5 54 Kc2 Kf3 55 Kd1 h4 56 Ke1 Kg2** with an easy win: **57 Ke2 h3 58 Bd6 Bh4 59 Be5 Bg3 –+**.

back



Solution 354: White to play

Nguyen Van Huy – Sandipan

Mumbai 2018/19

A tempo-gaining check is not necessarily a good idea.

50 h6!

50 g6+? Kg7 51 Rxe6 Rd8! and with his rook behind the passed pawn, Black holds: 52 Re7+ Kh8! (52…Kg8? 53 h6 d3 54 h7+ Kh8 55 Kg5 +–) 53 h6 d3 54 Re1 d2 55 Rd1 Rd5 with a drawn position.

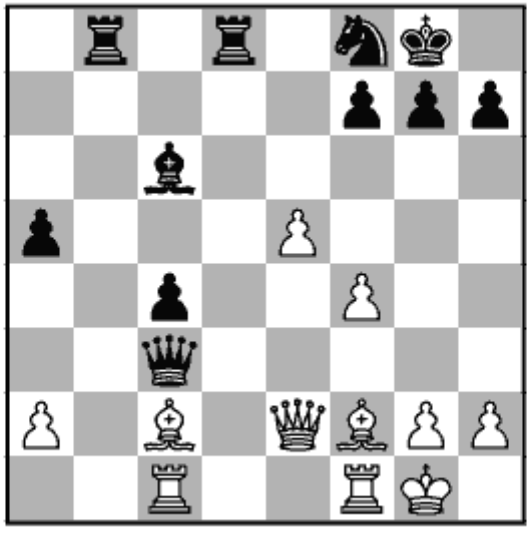
50…d3 51 Rf2+!

51 Rd2? Kg6 =.

51…Ke7 52 Rd2 Rd8 53 Kh5

with an easy win: **53…e5 54 g6** (54 h7 +–) **54…e4 55 h7** +–.

back



Solution 355: Black to play

Zierk – J.Williams

Burlingame 2019

At first sight putting the rook on d2 just gets Black's pieces tangled up, but he has a great idea up his sleeve.

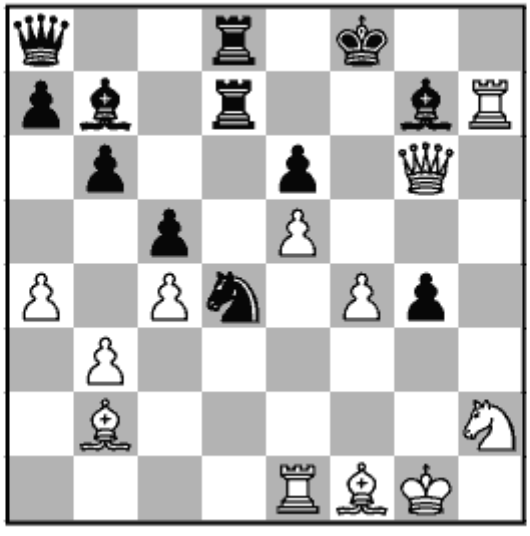
28…Rd2!

28…Rb2? leads to an unclear position after 29 Be1 Qd4+ 30 Rf2 or 29 e6!? Nxe6 30 Bxh7+ Kh8 (as played in the game).

29 Qe1 Qd4!!

Black is going to attack g2, and White lacks the resources to defend this square: **30 Bxd4** (30 Ba4 Ba8! 31 Bd1 Rbb2 –+) **30…Rxg2+ 31 Kh1 Rxc2+ 32 Rf3** (32 Kg1 Rg2+ 33 Kh1 Rg4+ –+) **32…Bxf3+ 33 Kg1 Rg2+ 34 Kf1 Rxh2** with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 356: Black to play

Movsziszian – Tarun (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White wants to play 38 Re3 and then pick up the g4-pawn. Black needs to appreciate in advance that if his rook is on e7, he will not be able to meet this with 38…Nf5.

37…Rc7!

37…Re7? 38 Re3! (38 Nxg4? Nf3+ 39 Kf2 Rd2+ 40 Re2 Be4 is unclear) and now:

a) 38…Nf3+ 39 Nxf3 Bxf3 (39…gxf3 40 Bd3 +–) 40 Rxg7 Rxg7 41 Qxe6 +–.

b) 38…Nf5 39 Nxg4! Nxe3 40 Nh6 +– and Black will be mated because his king is blocked by the rook on e7: 40…Rc7 41 Rh8+ Bxh8 42 Qg8+ Ke7 43 Qf7#.

c) 38…Bh1!? 39 Bxd4 Rxd4 40 Qxg4 Be4 +– is perhaps Black's best practical try: while he is objectively lost, he can hope for a miracle.

38 Nxg4

Here after 38 Re3 Nf5! (38…Nf3+? 39 Nxf3 Bxf3 40 Qxe6 +–) 39 Nxg4 Nxe3 (39…Be4!? is also unclear) White can't trap the king since 40 Nh6? loses to 40…Rd1 –+. After 40 Nxe3 the game is unclear.

38…Nf3+ 39 Kf2 Rd2+!

Not 39…Nxe1? 40 Nf6 +–.

40 Re2 Be4

with a completely unclear position.

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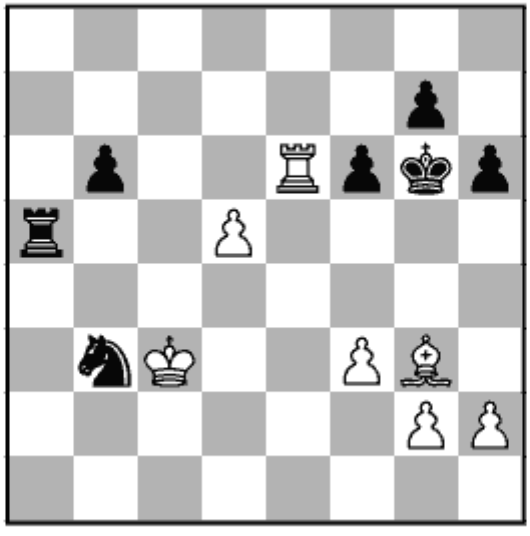

Solution 357: Black to play

Deviatkin – Nguyen Van Huy

Mumbai 2018/19

It is very important not to allow the white king to advance up the board.

54…Nc1!

54…Nc5? (played in the game) 55 Re7 Ra3+ (slightly better is the steely 55…Na6! 56 d6 Nb8 +/–; after 55…Ra1 56 d6 Rd1 57 Kc4 Black can't stop the white king: 57…h5 58 h4 +–) 56 Kc4 Ra2 57 d6 Rxg2 58 Kb5 Rb2+ 59 Kc6 +– and it is very hard for Black to give up his knight for the d-pawn. 59…Rb1 loses to 60 Bf2.

55 d6 Rc5+ 56 Kd4 Nb3+ 57 Kd3 b5! =

Black intends to check on d5 and transfer his knight to f5.

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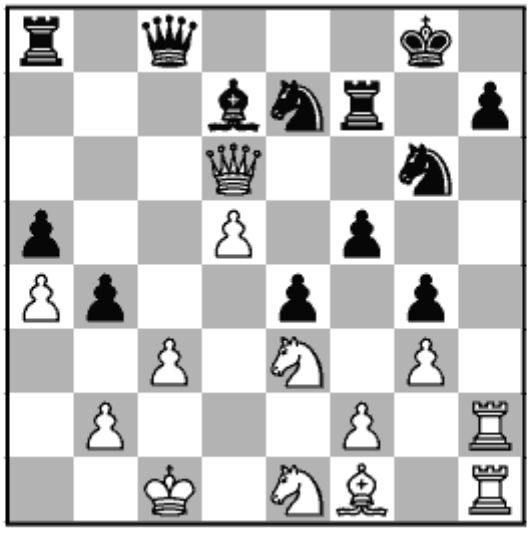


Solution 358: White to play

Rathnakaran – Movsziszian

Mumbai 2018/19

The main point to understand is that by putting his bishop on c4, White would invite counterplay with …f4! followed by … Nf5. The move White chose in the game, 28 Nc4?, also fails to address this idea and is bad: 28…bxc3! 29 bxc3 f4!, etc.

28 N1c2!

After 28 Bc4? bxc3 29 bxc3 f4! 30 gxf4 Nf5 the position is completely unclear. 31 Qxg6+!? proves unsuccessful after 31…hxg6 32 Rh8+ Kg7 33 R1h7+ Kf6 34 Nxg4+ Ke7 35 Rxc8 Rxc8 36 d6+ Nxd6 with a roughly level endgame.

28…bxc3

28…Bxa4 29 Bc4 and then:

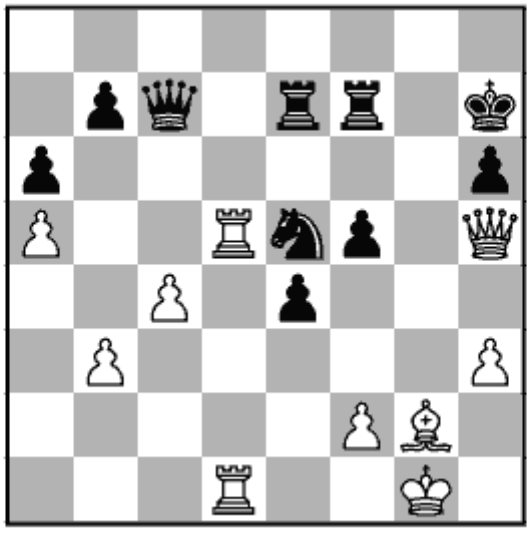
a) 29…f4?! 30 gxf4 Nf5 doesn't help any more: 31 Qxg6+ (31 Qb6!? +–) 31…hxg6 32 d6 +–.

b) 29…bxc3 30 bxc3 +/–.

29 bxc3

and White is close to victory. For example: **29…Bxa4** (29… Qxc3 30 Qxd7 Rc8 31 Ba6 +/– gives Black insufficient attacking resources; 29…f4 30 gxf4 Nf5 31 Qa3 +/–; 29…Qb7 30 Nd4 Bxa4 31 Qa3 +– threatens to advance the d-pawn) **30 Bc4 Rb8 31 Ba6** (31 Qa3 +/–) **31…Qd8 32 Qxd8+ Rxd8 33 d6 Rxd6 34 Bc4 +–** with an extra exchange and a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 359: Black to play

Limanovska – J.Wallace

Stockholm 2018/19

Black would like to double his rooks on the g-file. The difference between the two suggested ways to achieve this is that putting the rooks on f6 and g7 allows White a fleeting chance to take on e4.

40…Re6!

40…Rf6? 41 Kh1 Rg7 42 Bxe4!? fxe4 (42…Rg5 43 Qe8 fxe4 44 Rd7+ +=) 43 Qxe5 = was played in the game.

41 c5

This prevents the rook from immediately moving to g7, but fails to change the assessment of the position. Other moves:

a) 41 Re1 Rg6 42 Rxe4 fxe4 43 Rxe5 Qc6!? –+.

b) 41 Kf1 Qe7!? (41…Rg6 –/+) 42 c5 Qf6 43 Rd6 Nd3 –+.

c) After 41 Kh1?! Rg6 White has no tactic on e4, and loses: 42 c5 (42 Bxe4 Rg5 –+; 42 Rg1 Rg5 43 Qe2 Rfg7 –+) 42…Rg5

43 Qe2 Rfg7 –+.

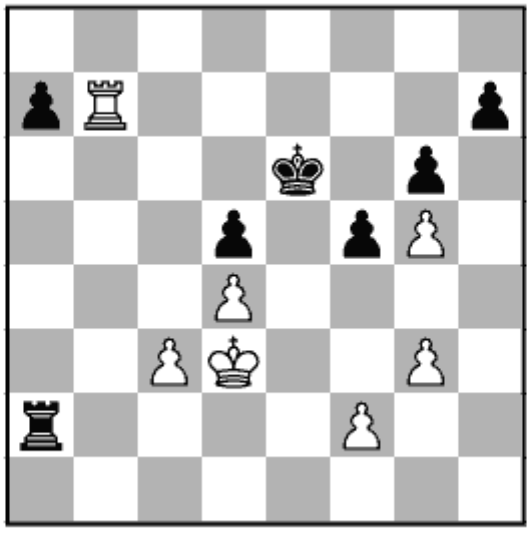
41…Nd3

Not 41…Rg6?, when 42 Rd6 is unclear, but 41…Qe7!? is a very good alternative.

42 Rxf5 Rg6 43 Kf1 Nf4 –+

Black wins a piece.

back



Solution 360: White to play

Stupak – M.Manik (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

An accurate assessment of either move should bring you very close to a correct decision.

41 Rxh7!

41 Ke3? Rc2 (41…f4+? is premature: 42 gxf4 Rc2 43 Kf3 Rxc3+ 44 Kg4 Rc2 45 Rxh7 Rxf2 46 Rg7 +–) 42 Rxa7 f4+! (now this sacrifice is timely, and enables Black to protect the h7-pawn; not 42…Rxc3+? 43 Kf4 Rd3 44 Ra6+ Kd7 45 Ke5 +–) 43 Kxf4 (43 gxf4 Rxc3+ 44 Kd2 Rh3 =) 43…Rxf2+ 44 Kg4 Rh2 and since White can't transfer his king to e5, the game is drawn: 45 Ra6+ Ke7 46 Kf4 Rf2+ =.

41…Rxf2 42 Ke3 Rg2

42…Rc2 43 Rc7 changes nothing.

43 Kf3 Rc2 44 Rc7!

It is important to lure the king to d6 so that it loses contact with f7. Not 44 Rxa7? Rxc3+ 45 Kf4 Rd3 46 Ra6+ Kf7 =.

44…Kd6

44…a5 doesn't help since after 45 Rc6+ Kf7 (45…Kd7 46 Rxg6 +–) 46 Kf4 a4 47 Rf6+ Kg7 48 Ra6 Rxc3 49 Rxa4 +– the white king will reach e5.

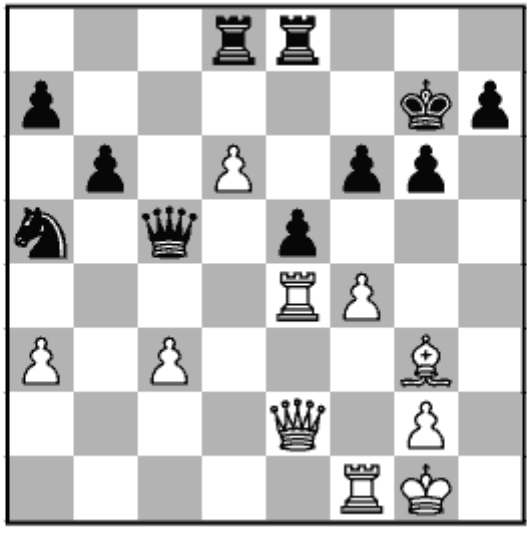
45 Rxa7 Rxc3+ 46 Kf4 Rd3 47 Ra6+ Ke7 48 Ke5 Rxg3

Or 48…Kf7 49 Ra7+ +–.

49 Rxg6 +–

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 361: White to play

Malek – Ornstein

Stockholm 2018/19

White must take vigorous action while the black knight is still on a5.

29 Bf2!

After 29 Kh1? Nc6! 30 fxe5 Nxe5 –+ (as played in the game) Black has activated his knight, and White has no compensation for the pawn.

29…Qxd6 30 Bh4

White has counterplay because Black has no time to cover the f-file because the rook on d8 is loose.

30…Qc5+

30…Kg8 31 fxe5 Qc5+ 32 Rf2 f5 33 Bxd8 fxe4 34 Bf6 is unclear.

31 Kh1 Rd7

After 31…Rd6 32 fxe5 fxe5 both 33 Qf3 and 33 Ref4!? are unclear.

32 fxe5 fxe5 33 Bf6+ Kg8 34 Rxe5 Rxe5 35 Bxe5!

White's bishop is much more active than the knight, which makes up for the missing pawn. Not 35 Qxe5? Qxe5 36 Bxe5 Nc4 –+.

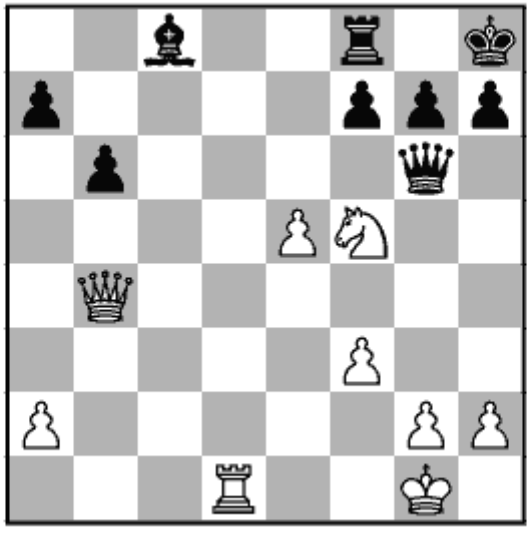
35…Qc4

After 35…Nc6 36 Bg3 White also retains compensation, while 35…Re7 36 Qf3! Rxe5 37 Qf7+ Kh8 38 Qf6+ = is a draw.

36 Qf3

With enough compensation for the pawn.

back



Solution 362: Black to play

J.Thybo – Haug

Stockholm 2018/19

The question is where the knight is more dangerous – d6 or e7?

26…Re8!

After 26…Rg8? 27 Ne7 Qc2 28 Qd6 (or 28 Qd4 Re8 29 Qd8) 28…Re8 29 Qd8! +– Black loses because his king has no *luft*. For example: 29…Qa4 30 Nxc8 h6 31 Qd7 Qxd7 32 Rxd7 Rxc8 33 Rxf7 +– (as played in the game).

27 Nd6

White gains nothing from 27 Qa4 Rf8 28 Qb4 Re8.

27…Rf8!

After 27…Rg8?! 28 f4 +/– the queen is tied to the f7-pawn.

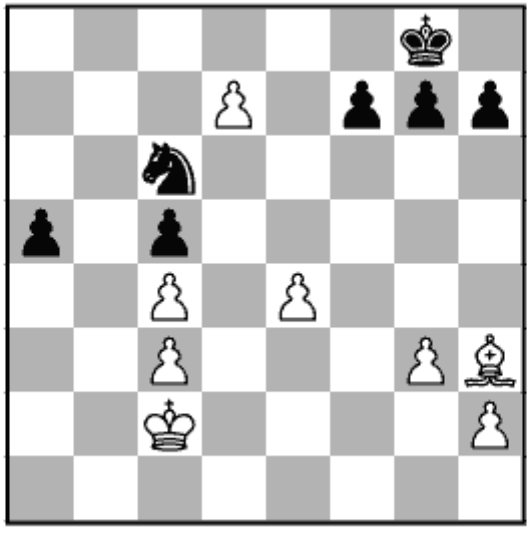
28 f4 Qc2 29 Qd2

There's no need to fear 29 Rd2 Qc1+ 30 Kf2 a5!? +=.

29…Qxd2 30 Rxd2 g6 +=

White has a slight advantage, but the worst is over for Black.

back



Solution 363: White to play

K.Varga – Mosadeghpour (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

After one of these moves, Black can suddenly escape his fate.

44 e5!

The wrong choice is 44 Kb3? Kf8 45 Ka4 Ke7 46 Kb5. Then:

a) 46…Ne5? loses to 47 Kxa5 +– or 47 Kxc5 +–.

b) 46…Kd8!! is a miracle save. Because White can't take the knight, Black holds the position.

44…Kf8 45 Bg2

45 e6?! fxe6 46 Bxe6 Ke7 +/– reduces White's advantage.

45…Nd8 46 Kb3 Ke7 47 Ka4

Or 47 Bd5!? Kxd7 48 Ka4 Ne6 (48…Nc6 49 Bxc6+ +–) 49 Kxa5 +–.

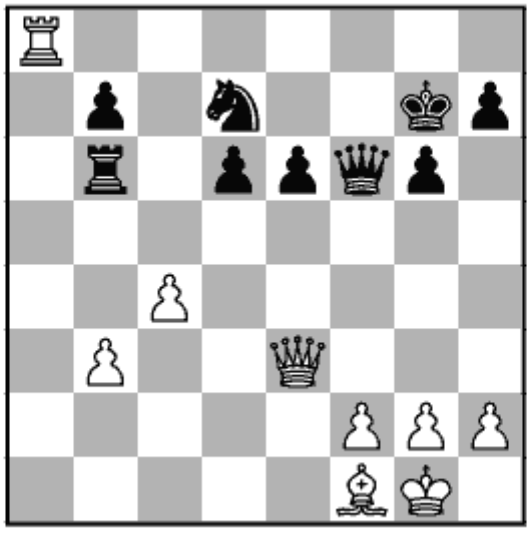
47…Ke6

47…Kxd7 48 Kxa5 +–.

48 Kxa5 Kxe5 49 Kb6 Kd6 50 Bd5 +–

with an easy win.

back



Solution 364: Black to play

Gauri – Ghazarian

Burlingame 2019

The wrong choice loses, whereas the correct one keeps the game roughly level.

30…Qe5!

After 30…Nc5? 31 Rc8! Black must secure his king by exchanging rooks, but this leaves him with a very bad endgame:

a) 31…Rxb3 32 Rc7+ Kg8 33 Qh6 +–.

b) 31…Qf7 32 b4! Nd7 33 Rc7 (33 b5 +–) 33…Rc6 34 Rxb7 +– was played in the game.

c) 31…Rc6 32 Rxc6 bxc6 33 b4 Nd7 34 Qa7 Qd8 35 b5 +– and White's well-supported passed pawn gives him a decisive advantage.

31 Rd8 Nc5 32 Qf3 Qf5

with a playable and roughly equal position: **33 Qc3+** (33 Qd1 Qf6 34 Rxd6 Rxb3 =) **33…Qe5**.

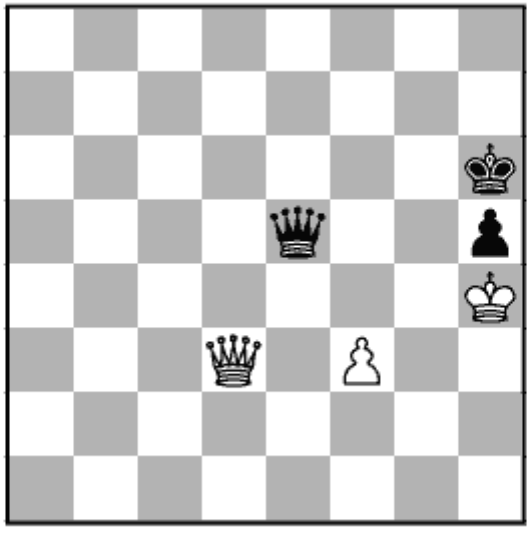
back

Part 2: No Clues!

For the rest of the book, you will be on your own: just a diagram, and an indication of who is to play. It is up to you to determine whether you should be playing for a win or a draw, and how deeply to analyse before deciding what you would play. Good luck! See you in the solutions.

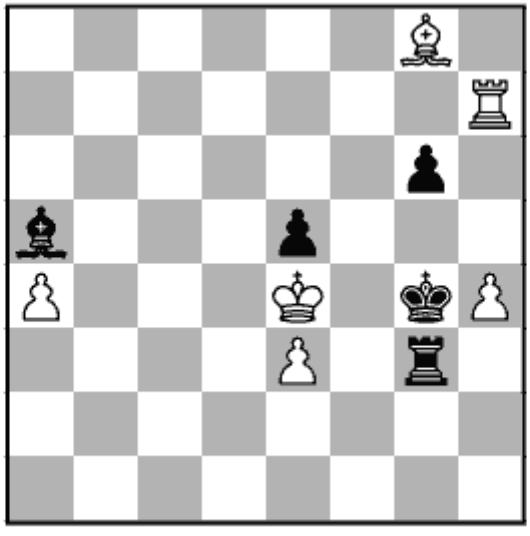
8: Not Too Hard

Our first batch of ‘no clues’ positions isn’t too tough: 82 positions of levels 1 and 2. The first few are especially easy to give you a little encouragement to persevere!



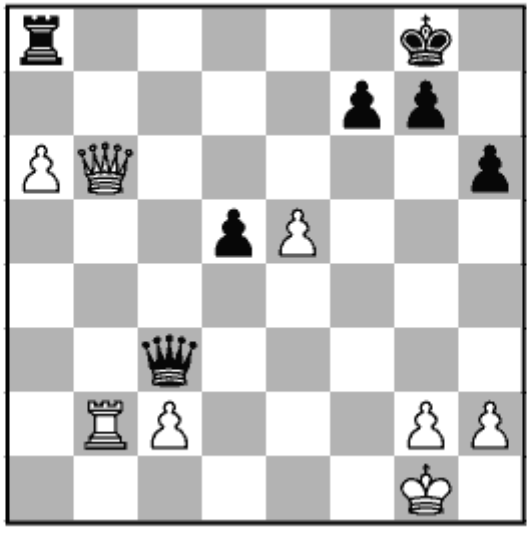
Puzzle 365: Black to play

answer



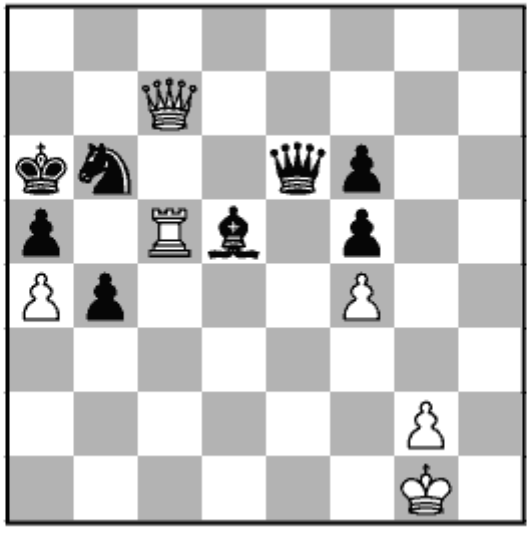
Puzzle 366: White to play

answer



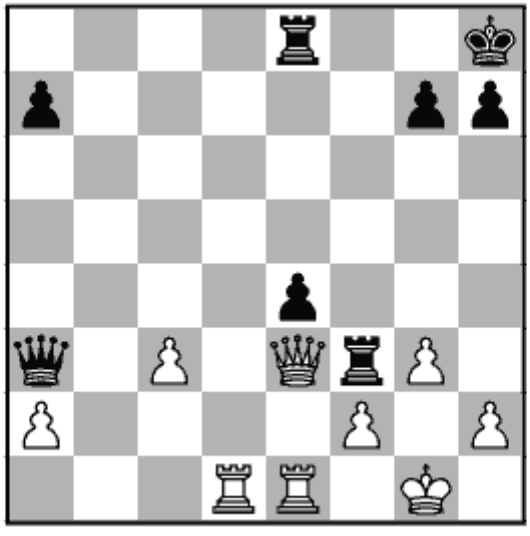
Puzzle 367: Black to play

answer



Puzzle 368: White to play

answer

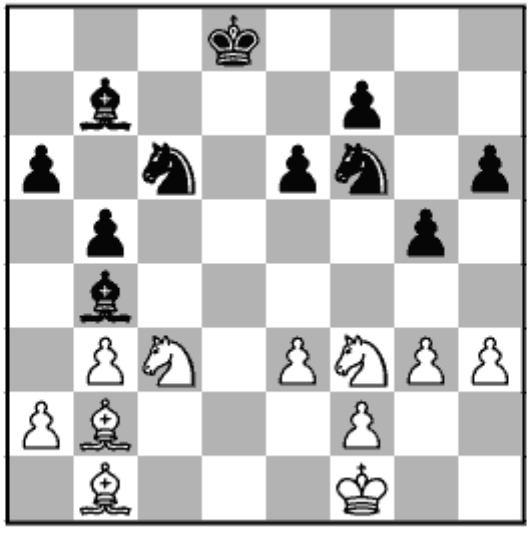


Puzzle 369: White to play

answer

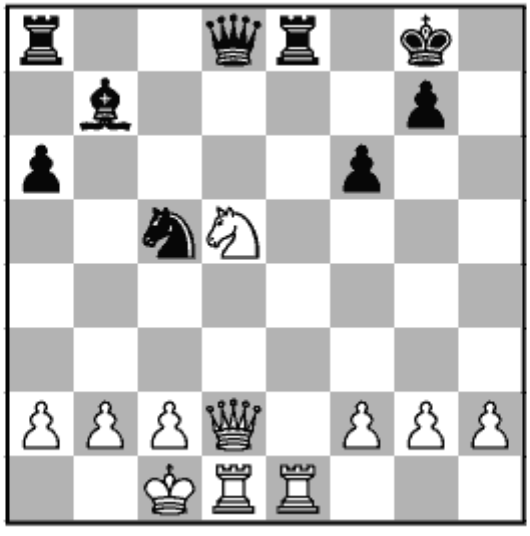
Puzzle 370: White to play

answer



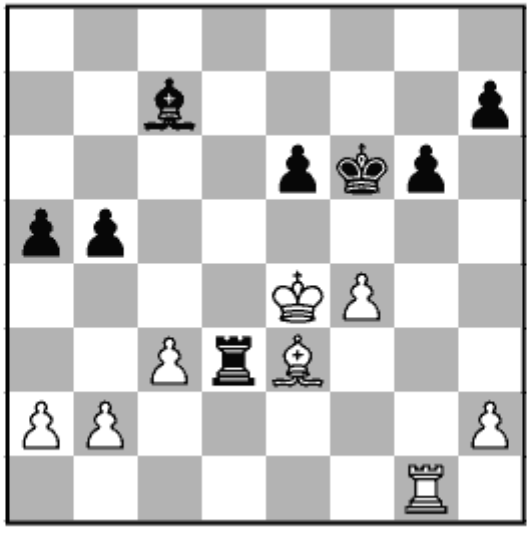
Puzzle 371: White to play

answer



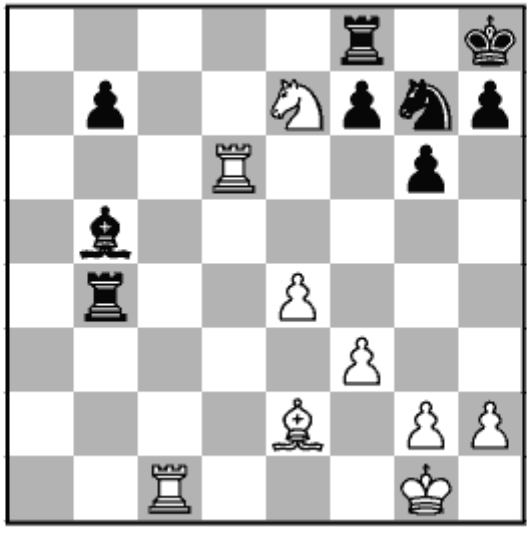
Puzzle 372: White to play

answer



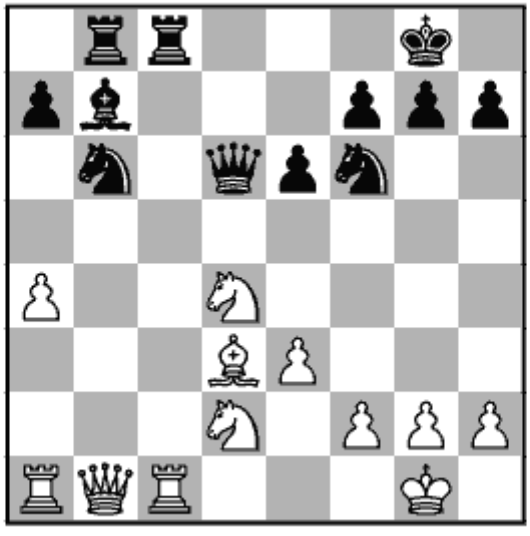
Puzzle 373: Black to play

answer



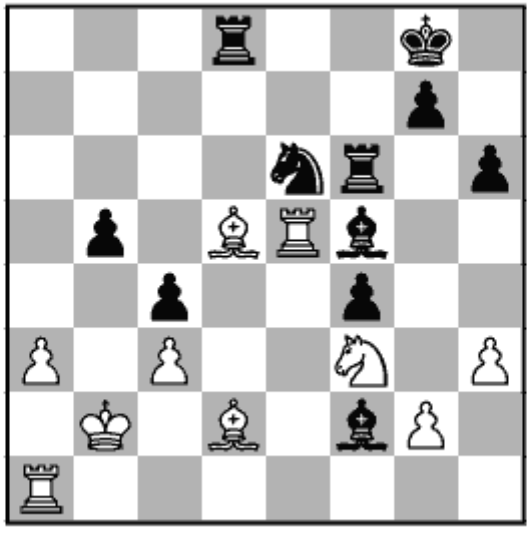
Puzzle 374: White to play

answer



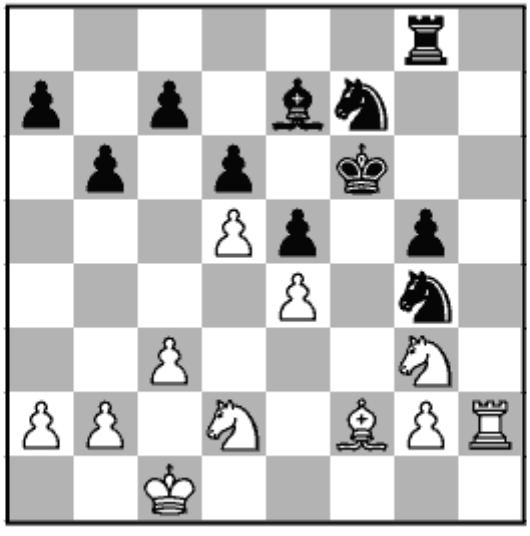
Puzzle 375: Black to play

answer



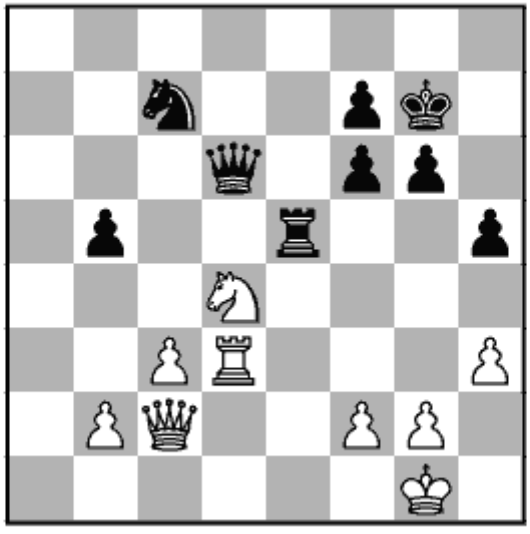
Puzzle 376: White to play

answer



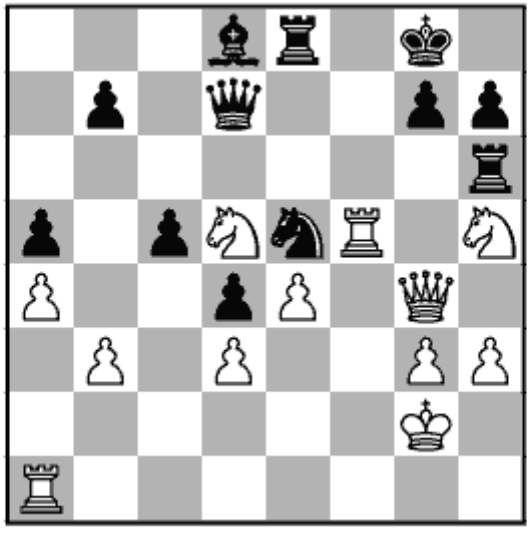
Puzzle 377: White to play

answer



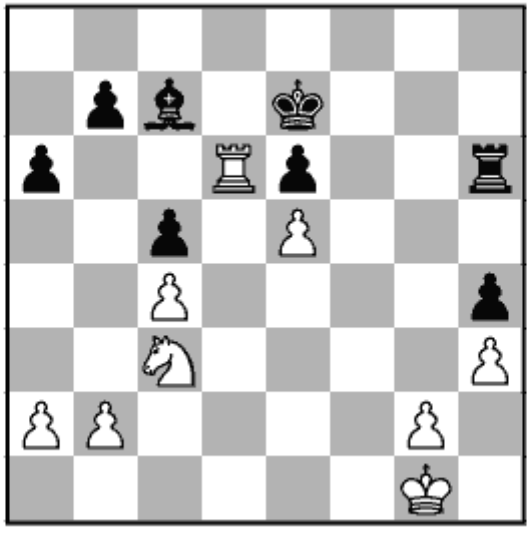
Puzzle 378: White to play

answer



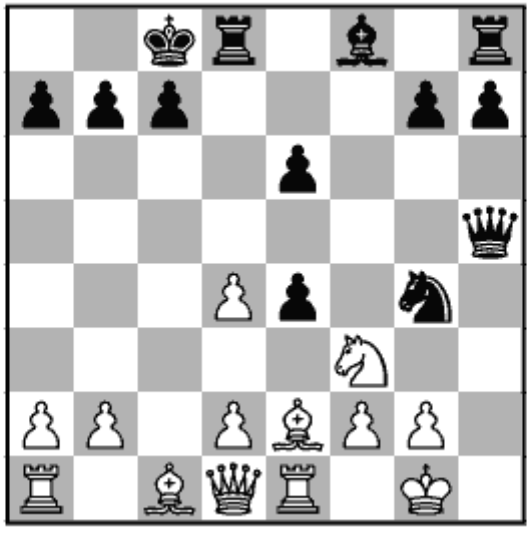
Puzzle 379: White to play

answer



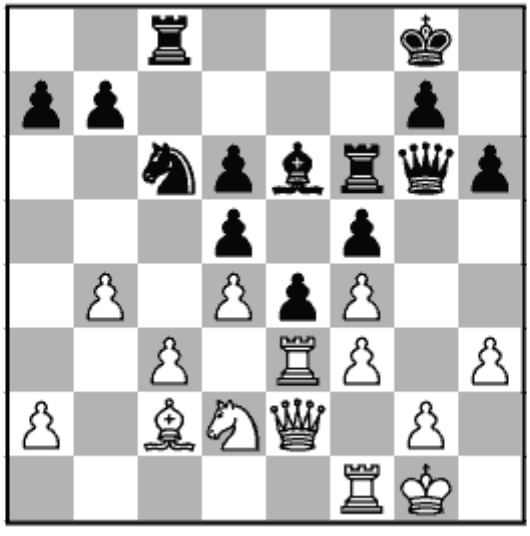
Puzzle 380: White to play

answer



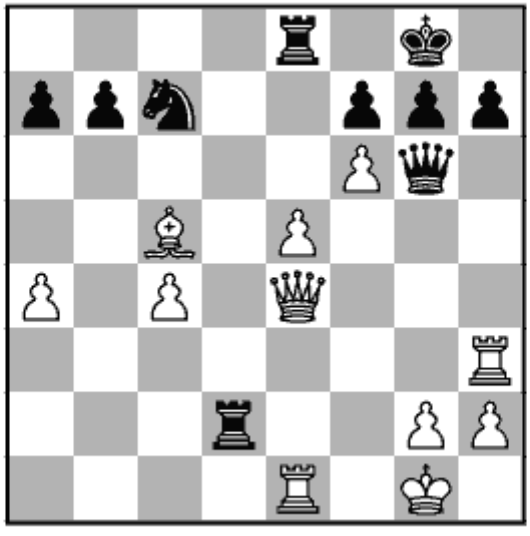
Puzzle 381: White to play

answer



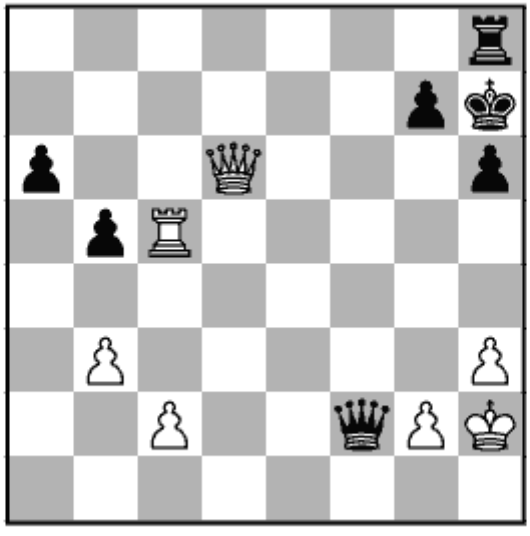
Puzzle 382: Black to play

answer



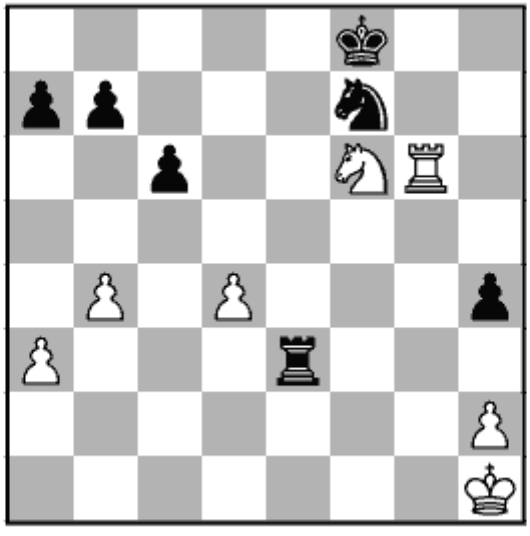
Puzzle 383: Black to play

answer



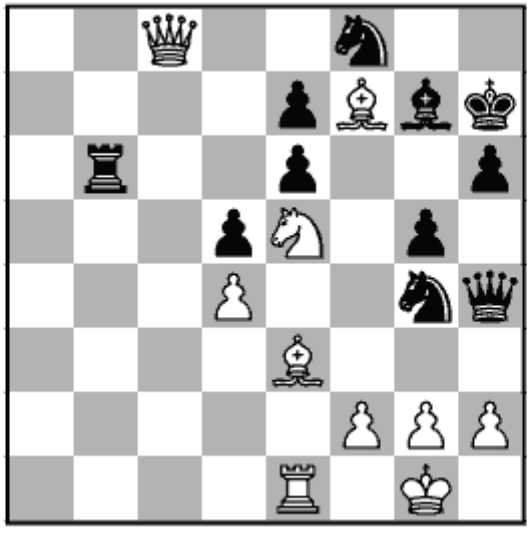
Puzzle 384: White to play

answer



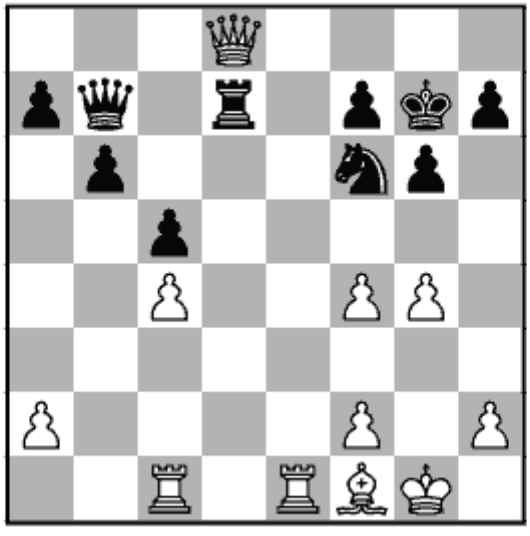
Puzzle 385: White to play

answer



Puzzle 386: White to play

answer

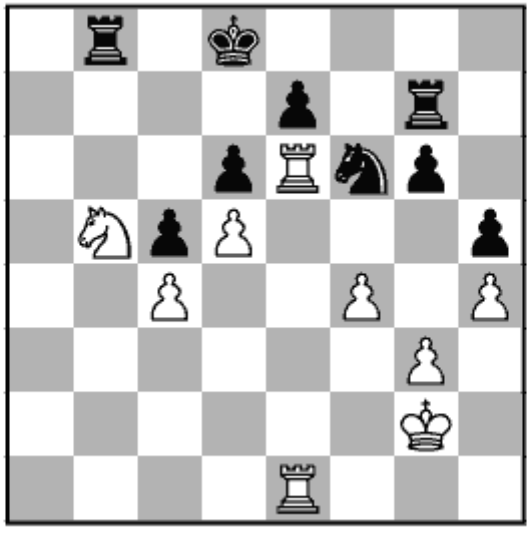


Puzzle 387: White to play

answer

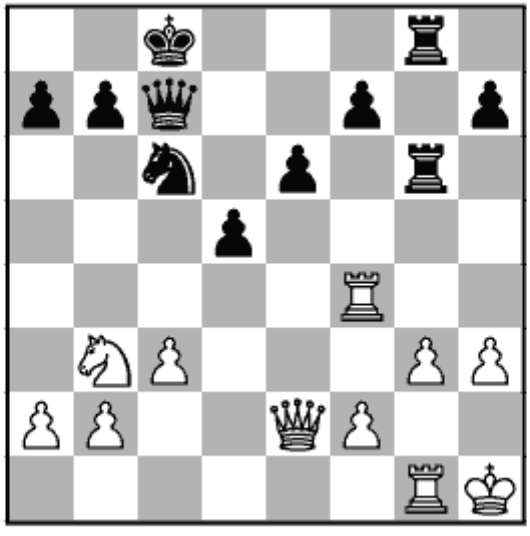
Puzzle 388: White to play

answer



Puzzle 389: Black to play

answer



Puzzle 390: Black to play

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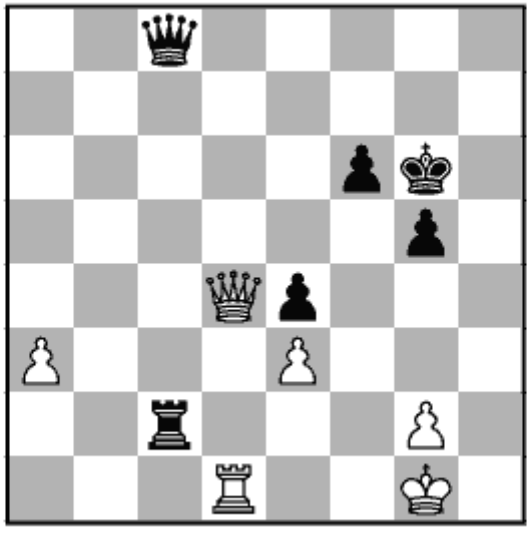
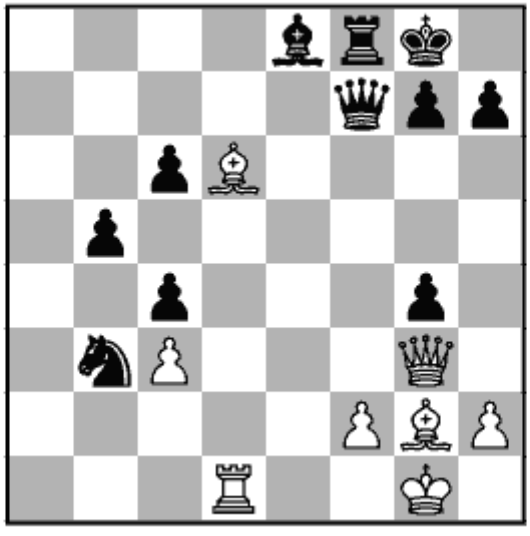


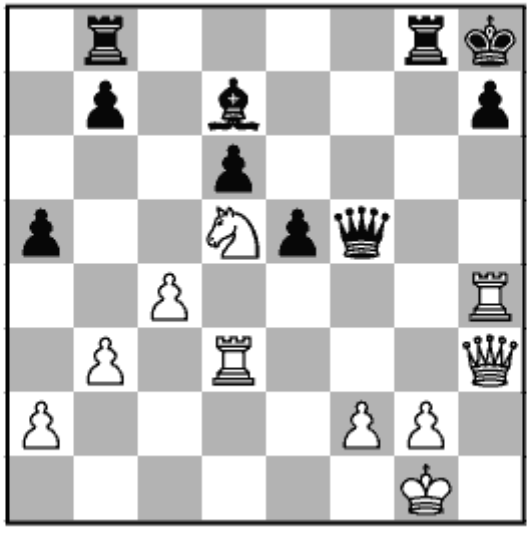
Puzzle 391: Black to play

answer



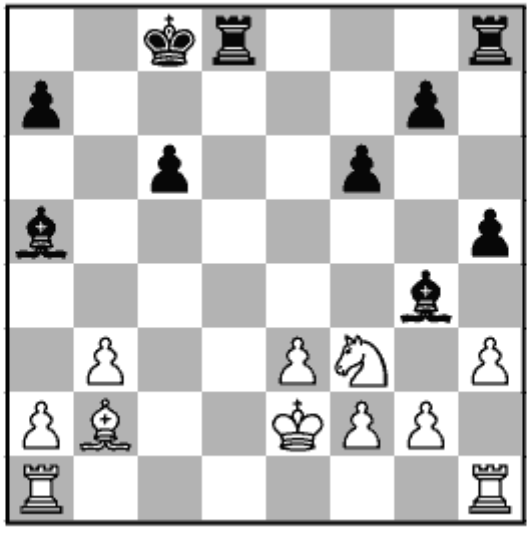
Puzzle 392: Black to play

answer



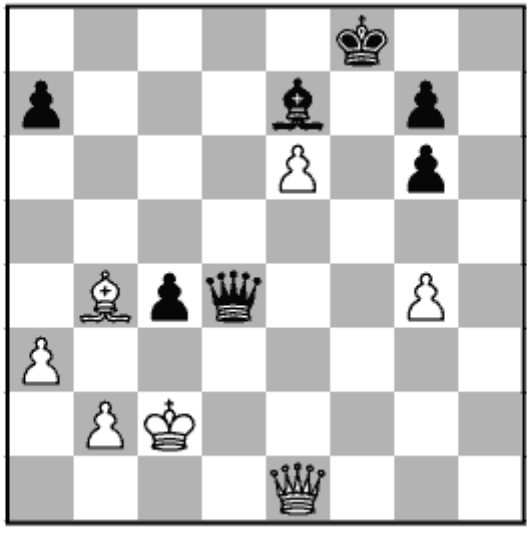
Puzzle 393: Black to play

answer



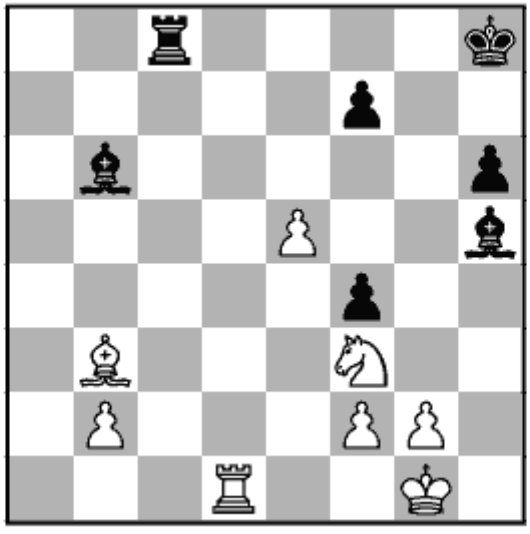
Puzzle 394: Black to play

answer



Puzzle 395: White to play

answer

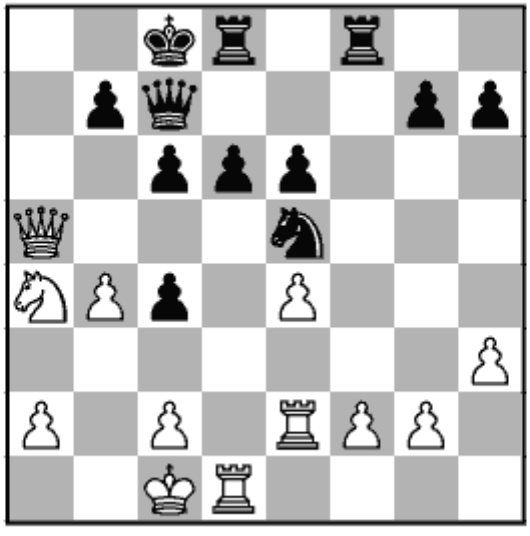


Puzzle 396: White to play

answer

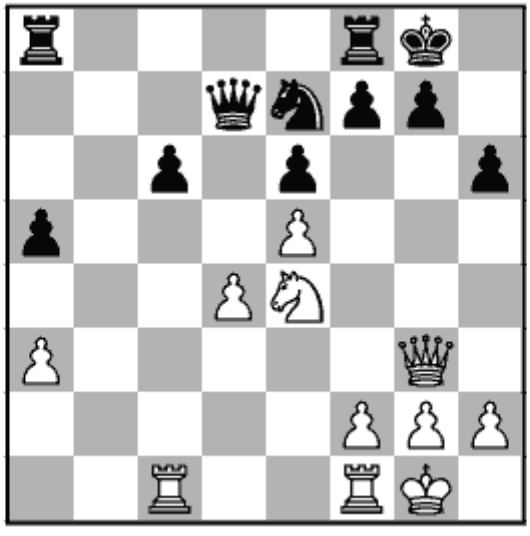
Puzzle 397: White to play

answer



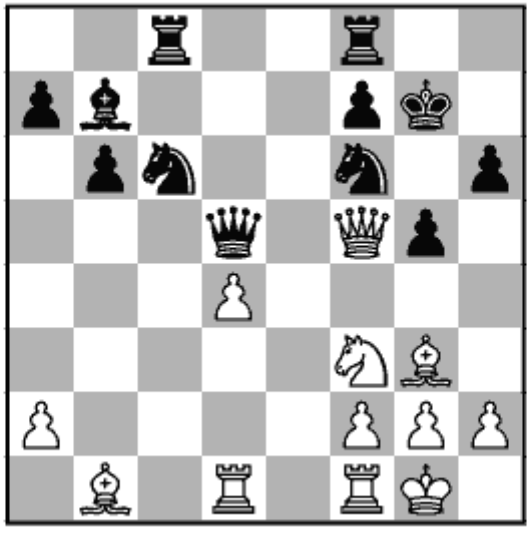
Puzzle 398: White to play

answer



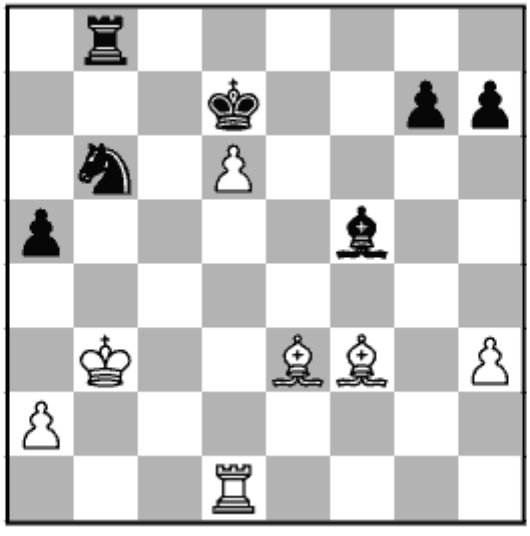
Puzzle 399: White to play

answer



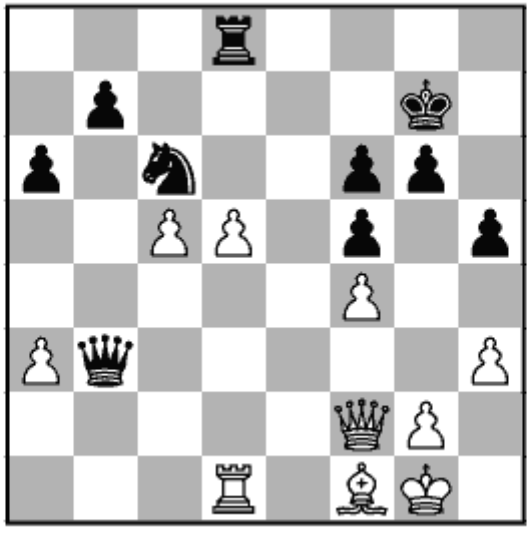
Puzzle 400: White to play

answer



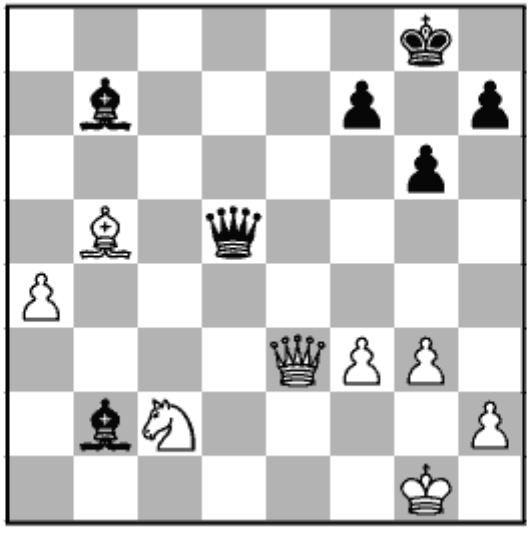
Puzzle 401: Black to play

answer



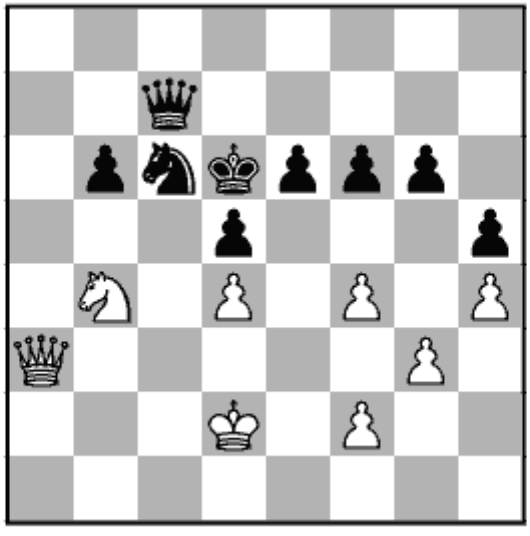
Puzzle 402: White to play

answer



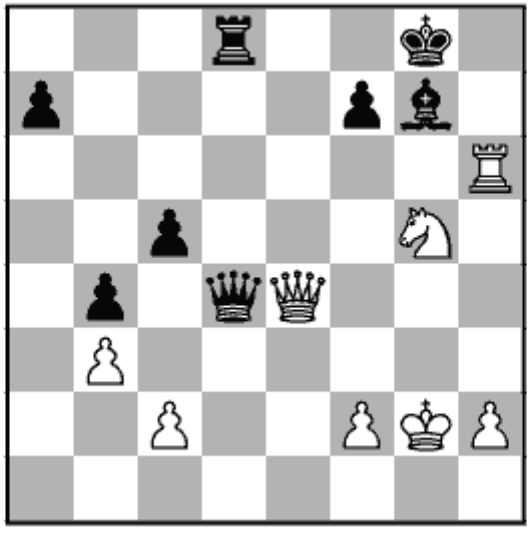
Puzzle 403: Black to play

answer



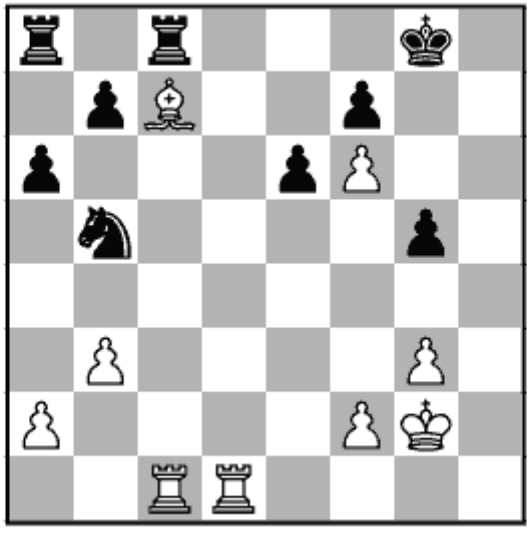
Puzzle 404: White to play

answer



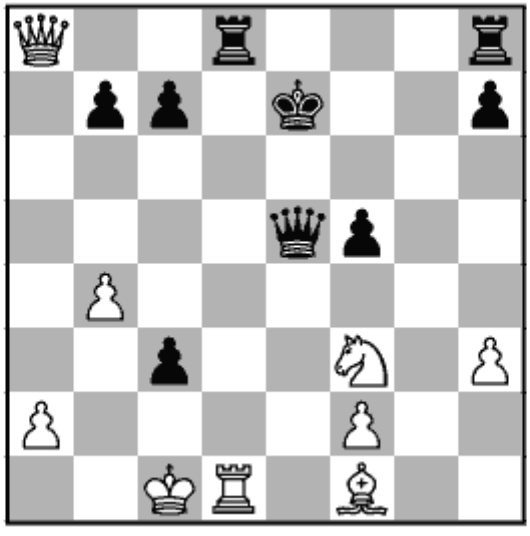
Puzzle 405: White to play

answer



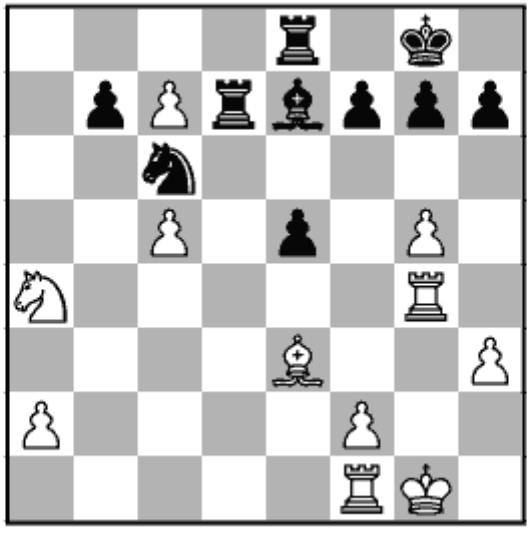
Puzzle 406: White to play

answer



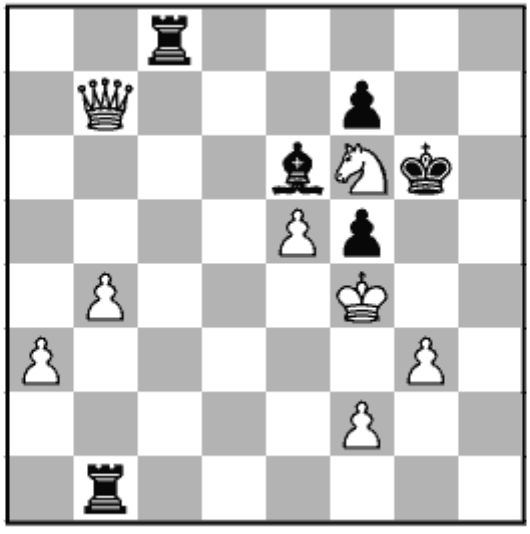
Puzzle 407: White to play

answer



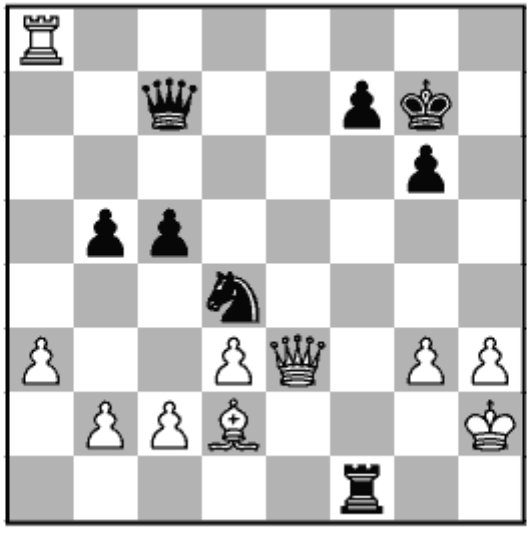
Puzzle 408: White to play

answer



Puzzle 409: Black to play

answer

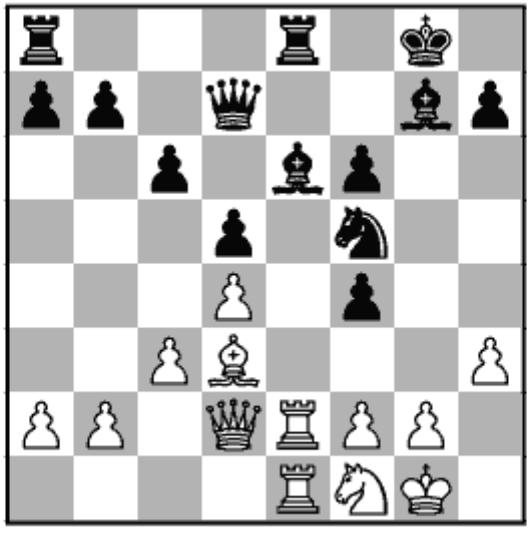


Puzzle 410: Black to play

answer

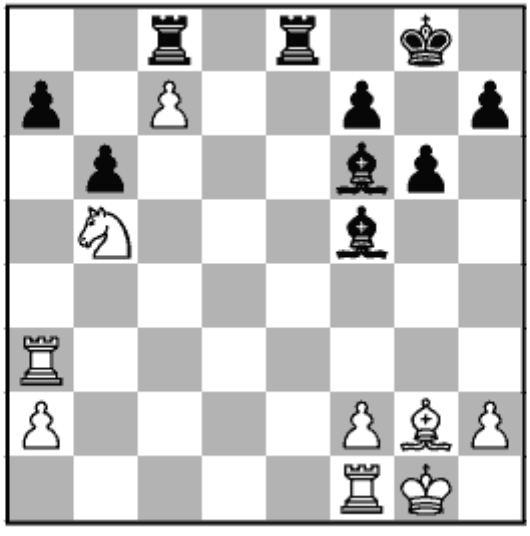
Puzzle 411: White to play

answer



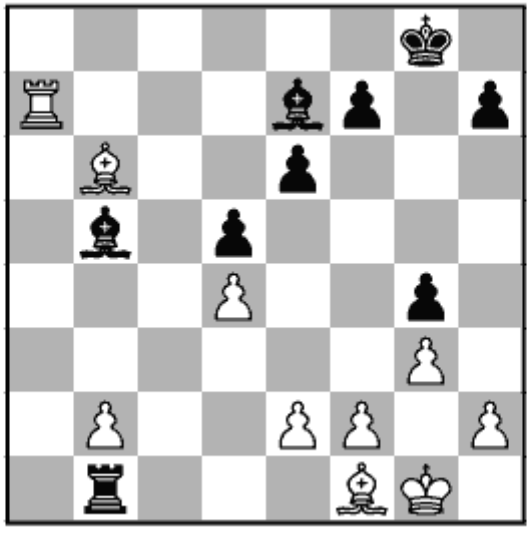
Puzzle 412: White to play

answer



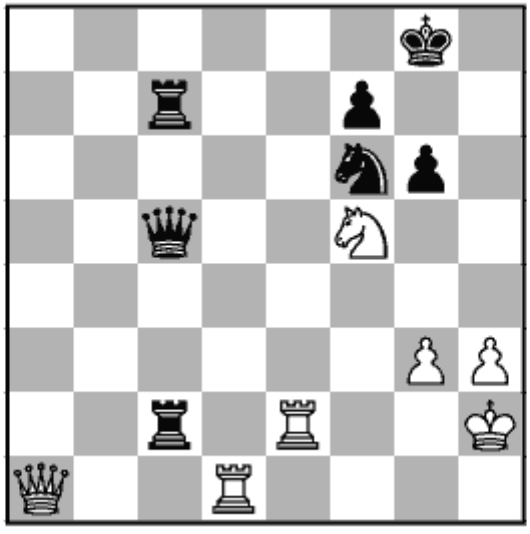
Puzzle 413: Black to play

answer



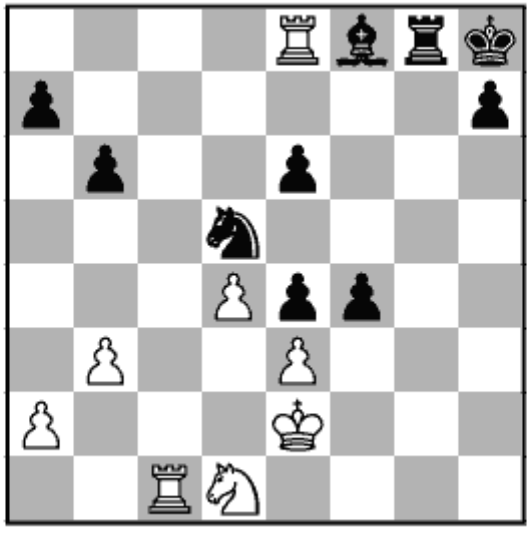
Puzzle 414: White to play

answer



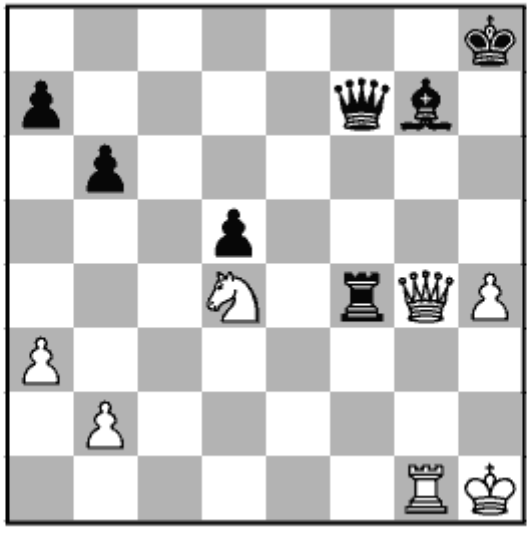
Puzzle 415: White to play

answer



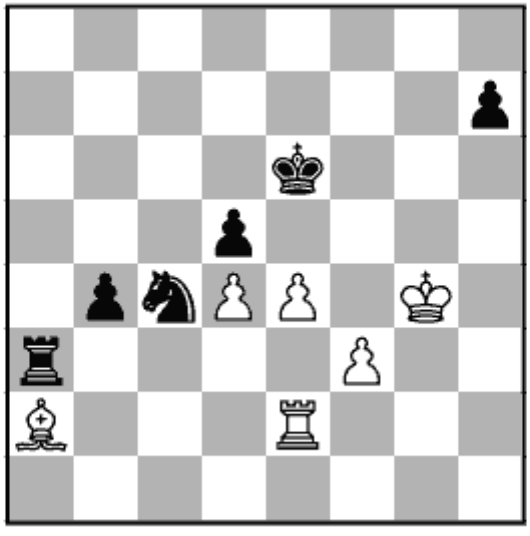
Puzzle 416: White to play

answer



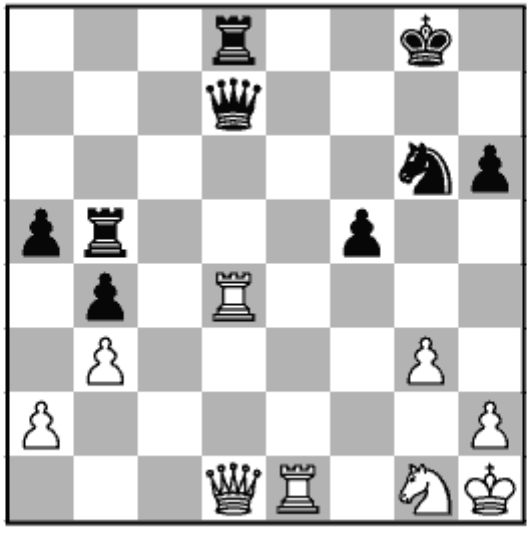
Puzzle 417: White to play

answer



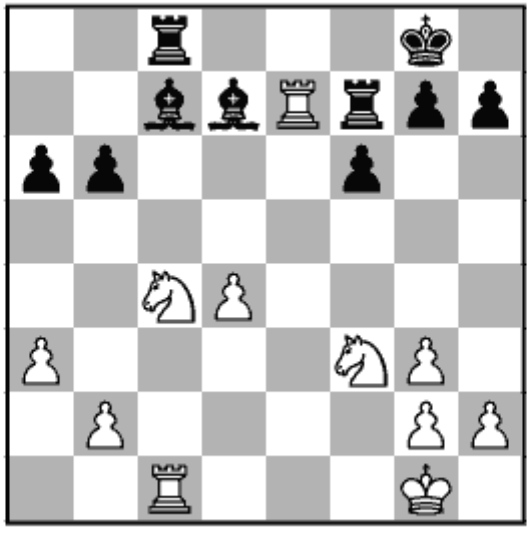
Puzzle 418: White to play

answer



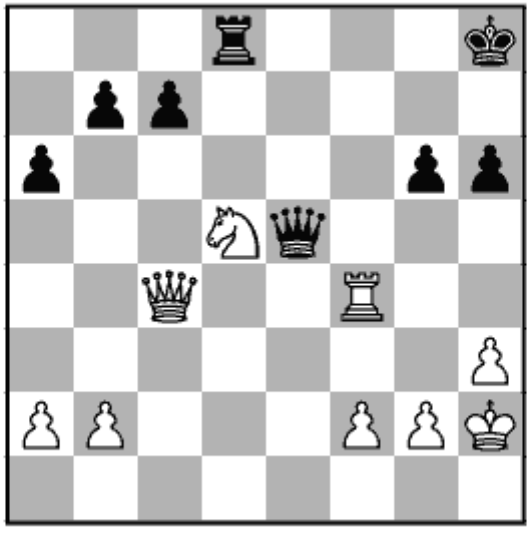
Puzzle 419: Black to play

answer



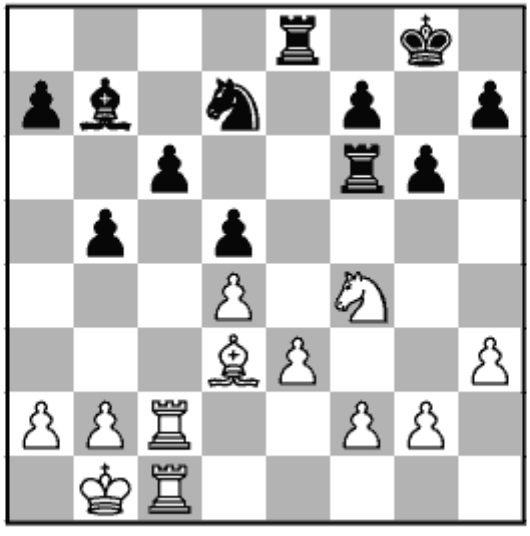
Puzzle 420: White to play

answer



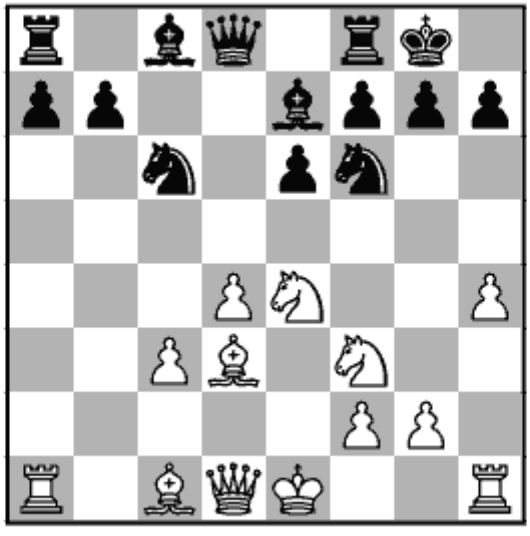
Puzzle 421: Black to play

answer



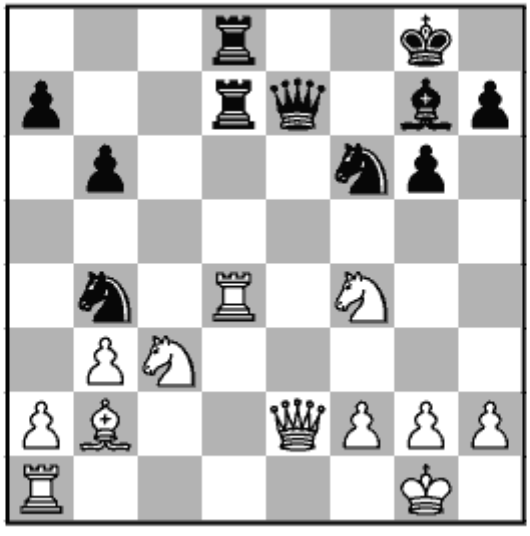
Puzzle 422: White to play

answer



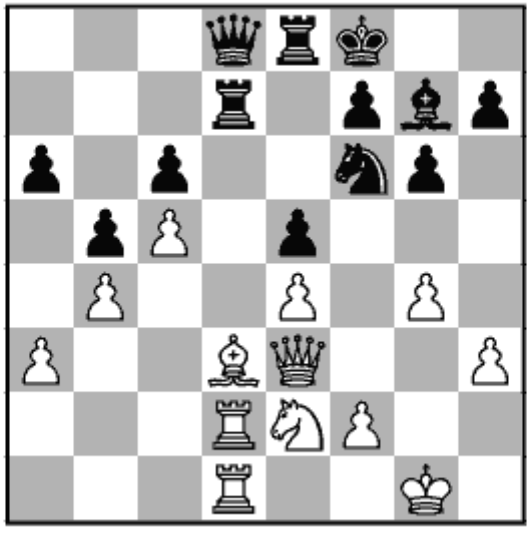
Puzzle 423: White to play

answer



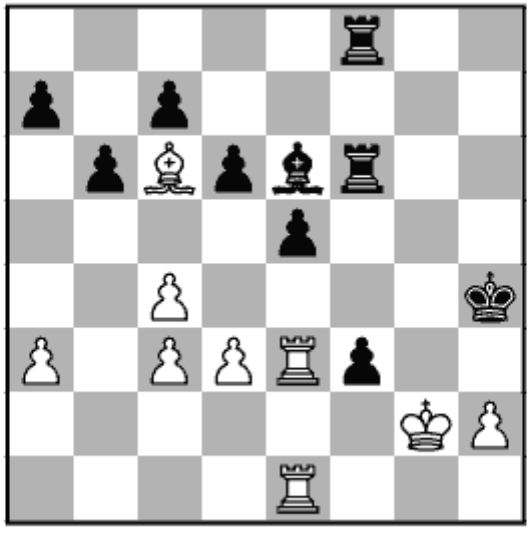
Puzzle 424: Black to play

answer



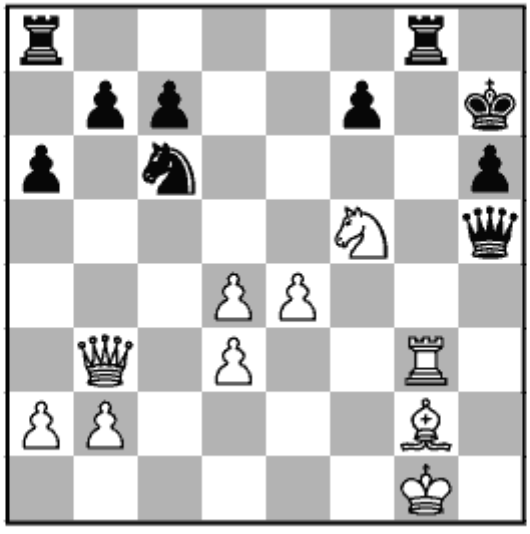
Puzzle 425: White to play

answer



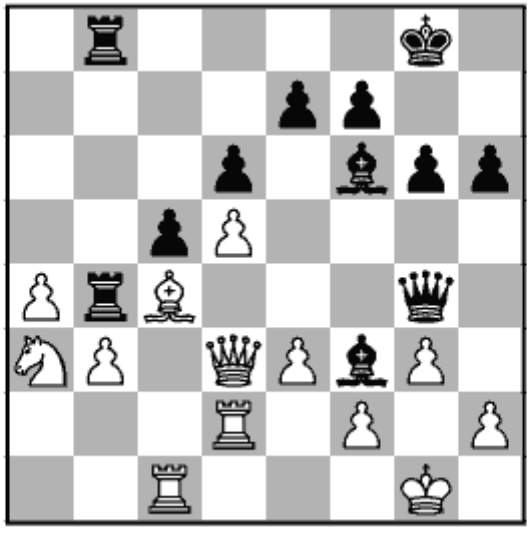
Puzzle 426: White to play

answer



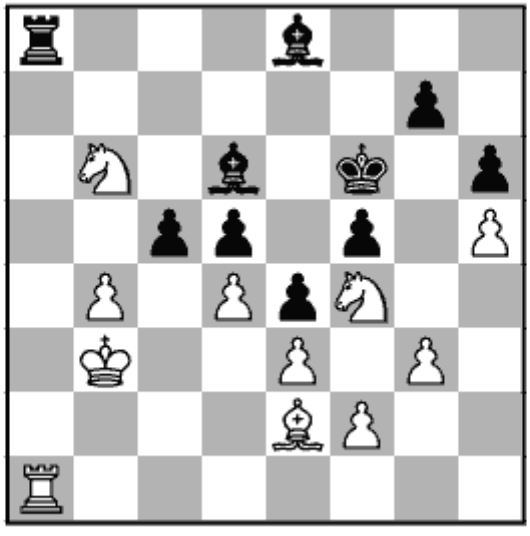
Puzzle 427: White to play

answer



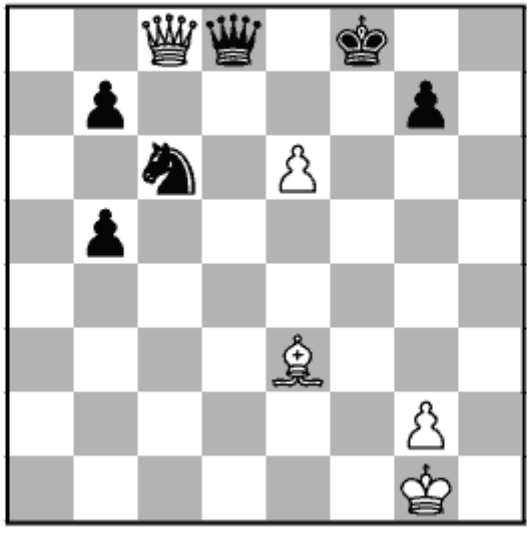
Puzzle 428: Black to play

answer



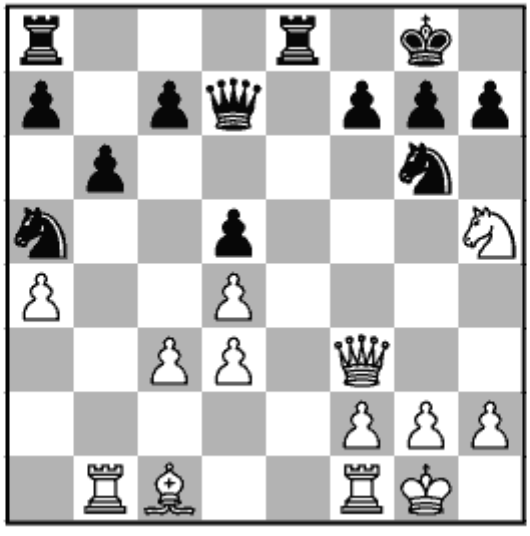
Puzzle 429: Black to play

answer



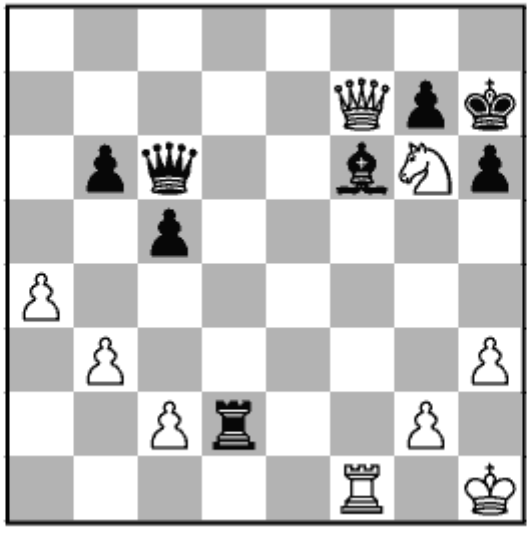
Puzzle 430: White to play

answer



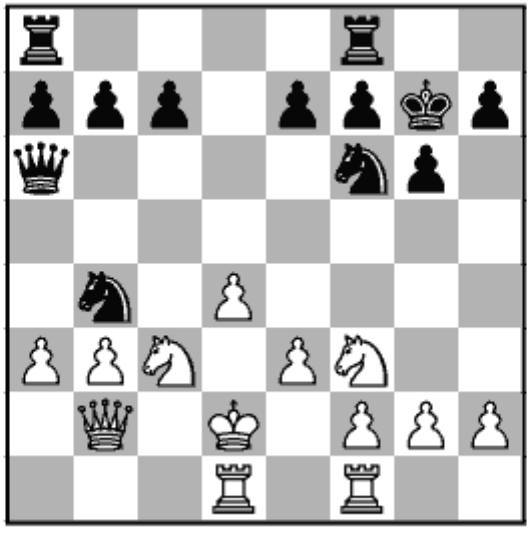
Puzzle 431: White to play

answer



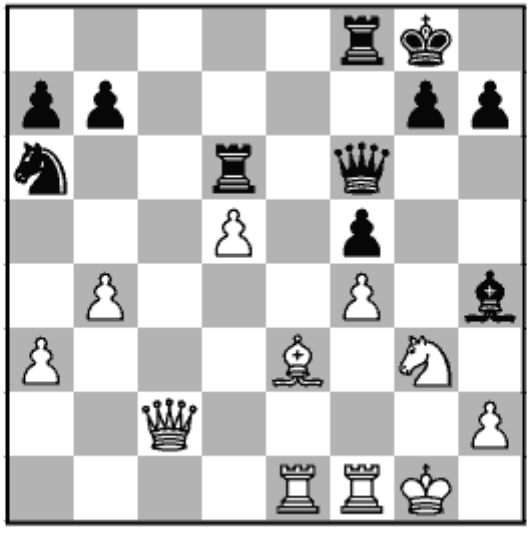
Puzzle 432: White to play

answer



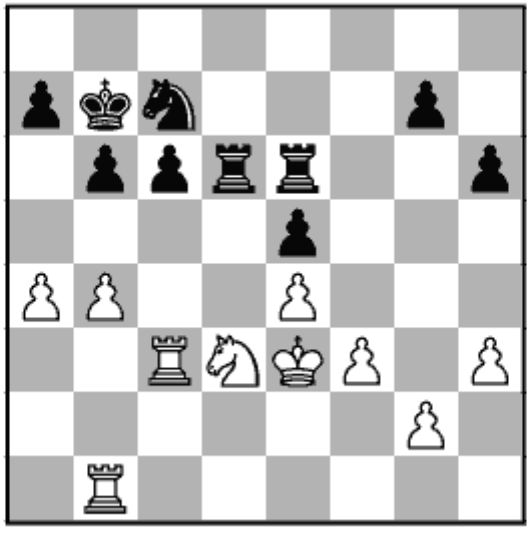
Puzzle 433: Black to play

answer



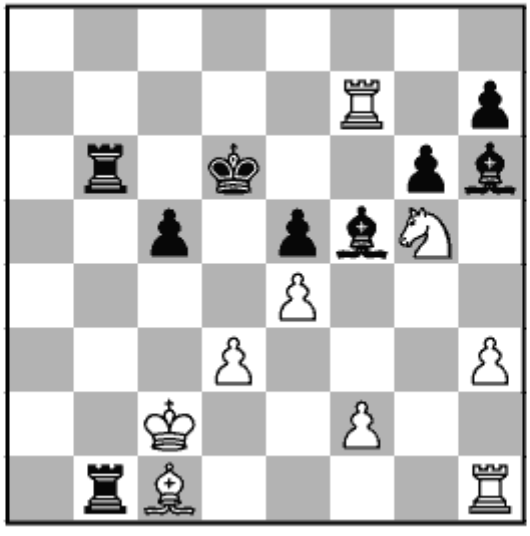
Puzzle 434: White to play

answer



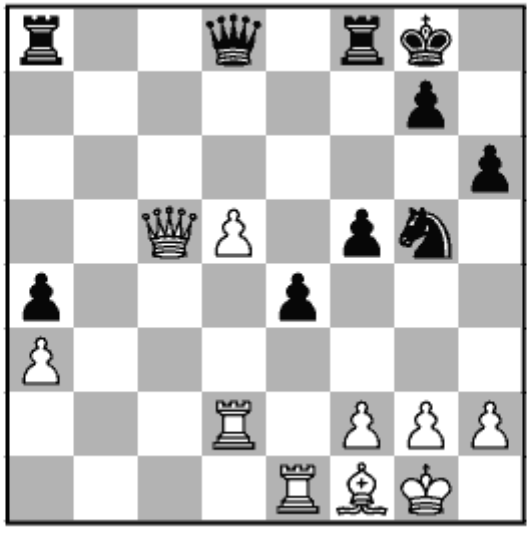
Puzzle 435: White to play

answer



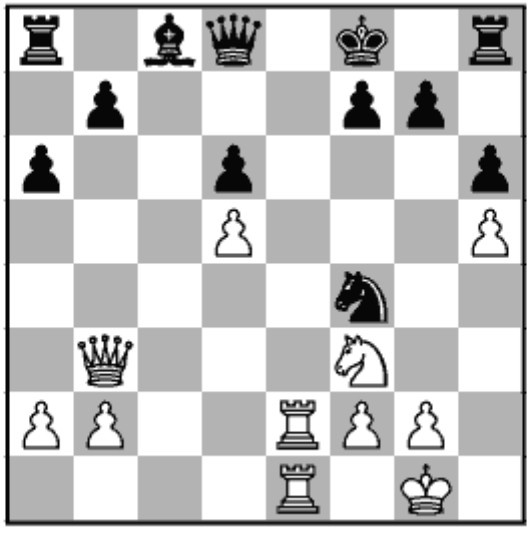
Puzzle 436: White to play

answer



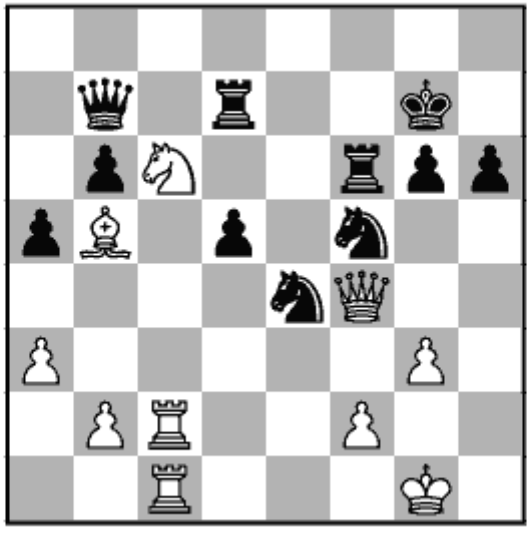
Puzzle 437: Black to play

answer



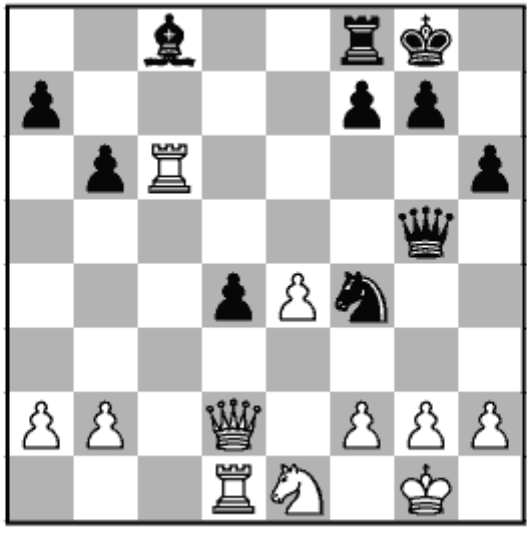
Puzzle 438: White to play

answer



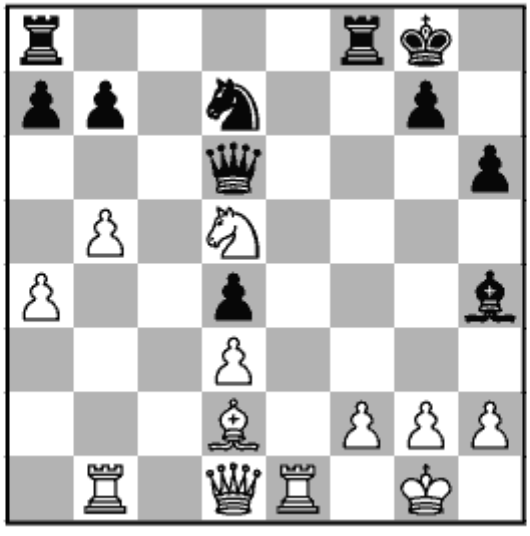
Puzzle 439: White to play

answer



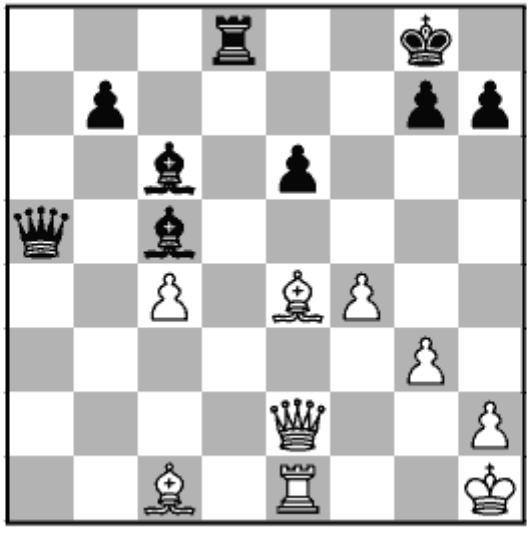
Puzzle 440: Black to play

answer



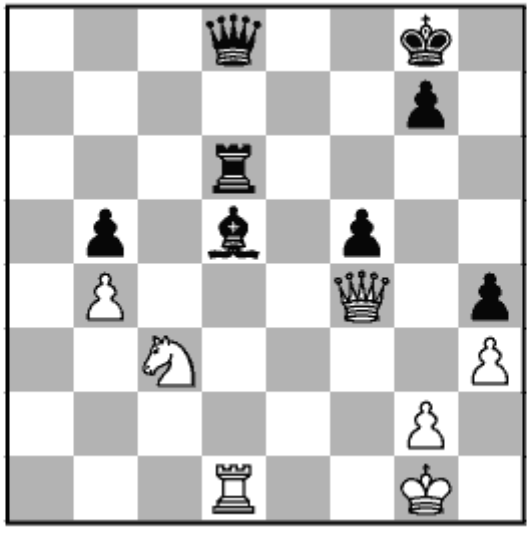
Puzzle 441: White to play

answer



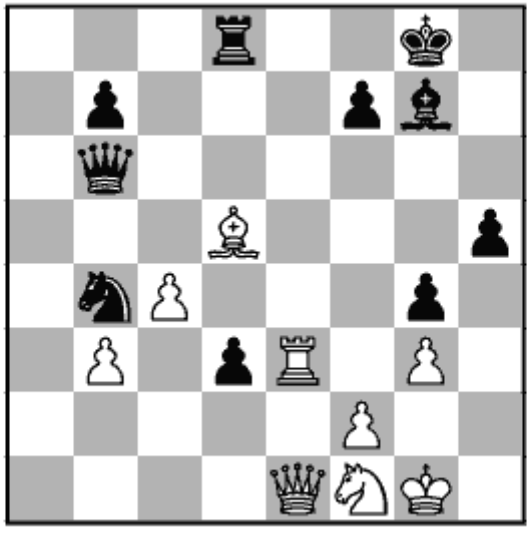
Puzzle 442: Black to play

answer



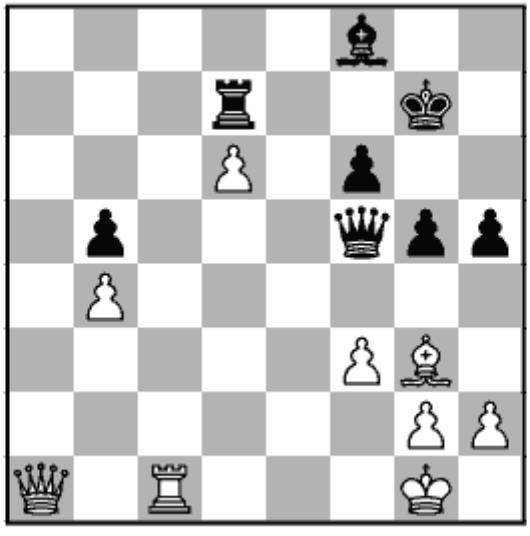
Puzzle 443: Black to play

answer



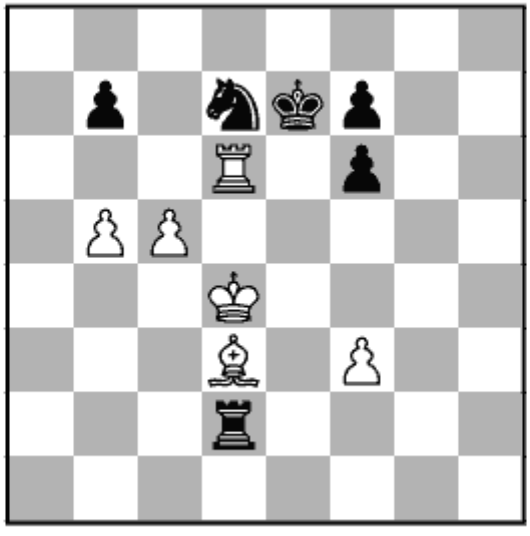
Puzzle 444: White to play

answer



Puzzle 445: White to play

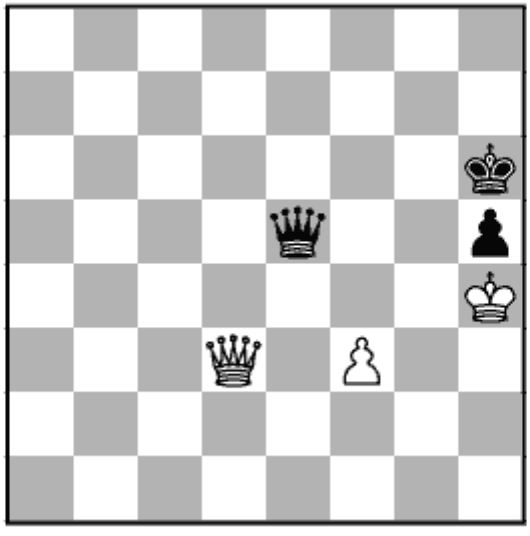
answer



Puzzle 446: Black to play

answer

Solutions for Chapter 8



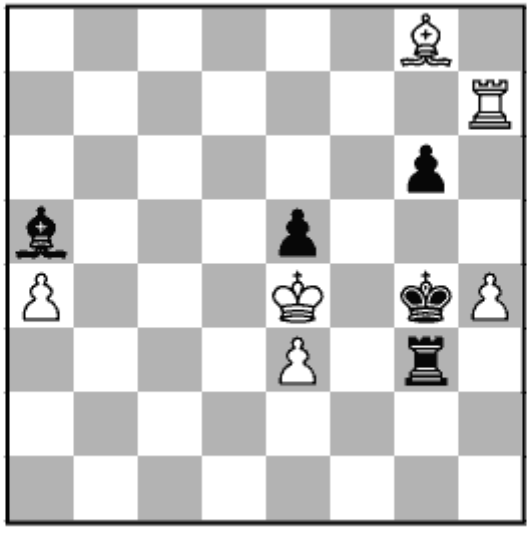
Solution 365: Black to play

Sutković – Strinić (variation)

Sarajevo 2019

The white king is short of squares, so **64…Qh2#** is instant mate.

back



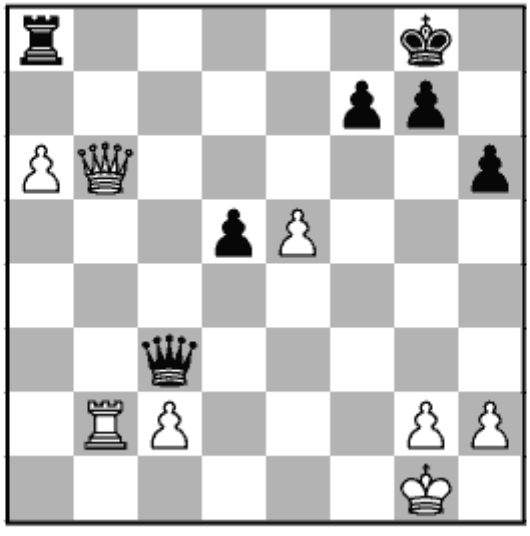
Solution 366: White to play

Krzywda – Fiedorek

Wroclaw 2019

41 Be6# (1-0)

back



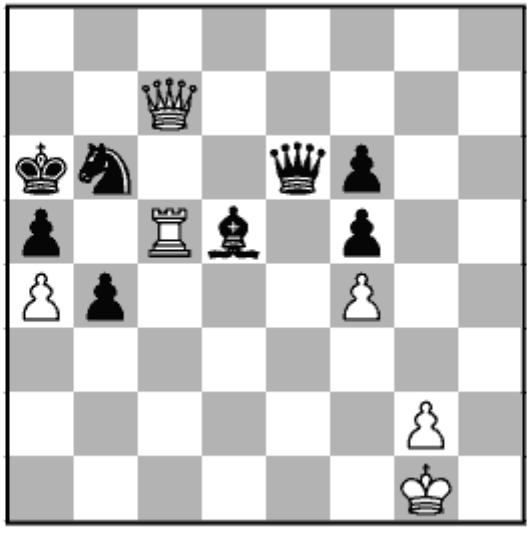
Solution 367: Black to play

Sinauridze – Rasa

Latvian Ch, Riga 2019

35…Qe1# (0-1)

back



Solution 368: White to play

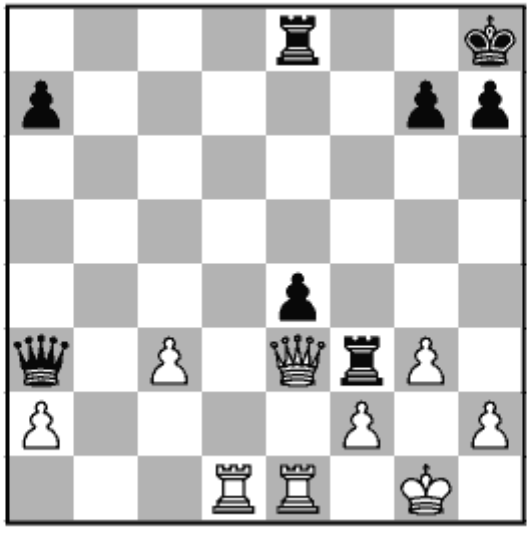
V.Karthik – Ynojosa (variation)

Burlingame 2019

White must force mate, since otherwise his position is hopeless.

50 Rxa5+! Kxa5 51 Qa7#

back



Solution 369: White to play

Wang Puxuan – Guan Runpei

Tianjin 2018/19

White should have played **41 Qxf3! +–** since if Black takes the queen, he'll be mated: **41…exf3 42 Rxe8+ Qf8 43 Rxf8#**.

back

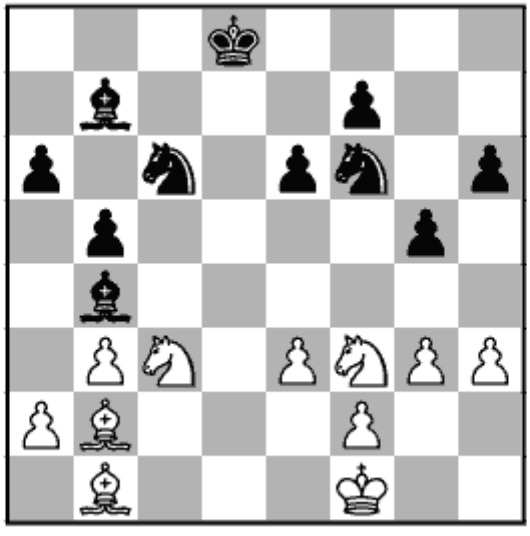
Solution 370: White to play

A.Barton – Park Sijoon

Hastings 2018/19

Black's previous move, 10…b6??, left a fatal weakness on c6, so **11 Nc6! +–** wins the queen and the game.

back



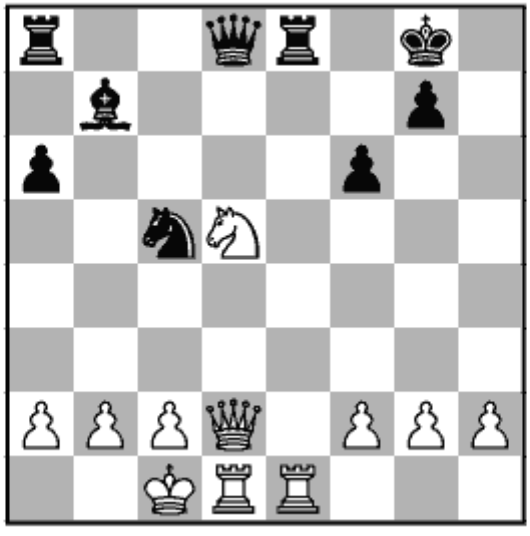
Solution 371: White to play

Aaryan – Ankit (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

The undefended knight on f6 invites a tactical blow: **22 Nxb5! Ke7** (or 22…axb5 23 Bxf6+ +/–) **23 Nc3 +/–** with an extra pawn and good chances to win.

back



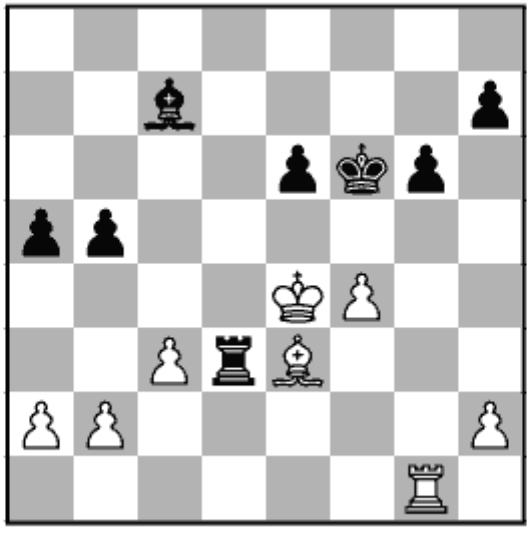
Solution 372: White to play

Siva – Snehal

Mumbai 2018/19

If we look closely at the position we notice that after an exchange of rooks White can make a knight fork: **21 Rxe8+!** (21 Ne7+? Kf8! offers White nothing, though he can still make a draw by repetition after the forced sequence 22 Qf4! Qa5! 23 Ng6+! Kf7! 24 Qc4+! Kxg6 25 Qg4+) **21…Qxe8 22 Nc7! Qc6 23 Nxa8 +–**. In an open position, rook and three pawns usually overpower a bishop and knight. White has a decisive advantage.

back



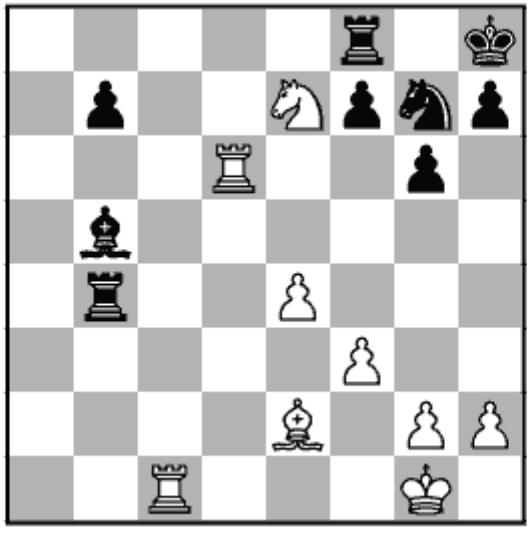
Solution 373: Black to play

Wang Puxuan – C.Hunt

Tianjin 2018/19

When facing a bishop, you need to be careful about your king and rook being on the same diagonal. Black brought this about by **38…Rxe3+! 39 Kxe3 Bb6+ 0-1**. With an extra bishop, Black wins easily.

back



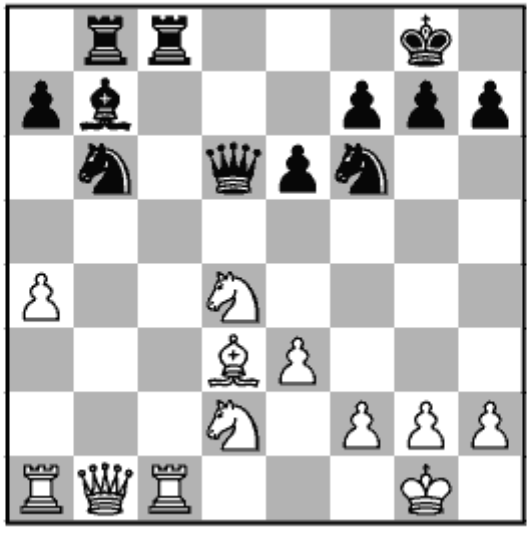
Solution 374: White to play

Jiang Qinyu – Chu Ruotong

Tianjin 2018/19

23 Rb6! (winning the bishop or an exchange; after 23 Bxb5? Rxb5, the game later ended in a draw) **23…Rxe4** (23…Bxe2 24 Rxb4 +–) **24 fxe4 Bxe2 25 Rxb7 +–** and White's victory is just a question of time.

back



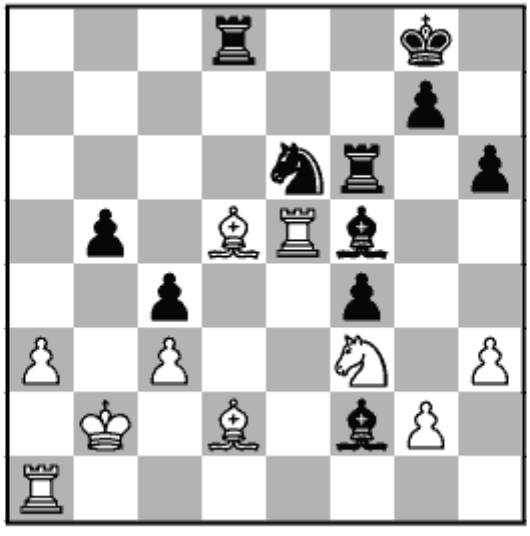
Solution 375: Black to play

M.Rahman – Bhambure (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White has too many pieces on the d-file. Black just needs to deflect the white queen so the d3-bishop is left undefended. **19…Rxc1+! 20 Qxc1 e5 –+** wins a piece and the game.

back



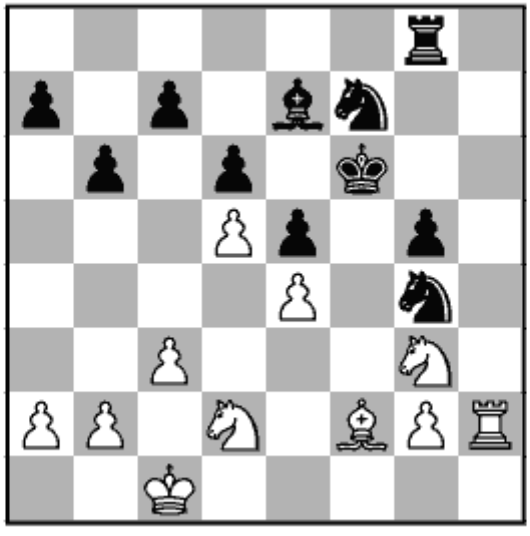
Solution 376: White to play

Li Kam – C.Hunt (based on)

Tianjin 2018/19

With a single move, White removes both defenders of the e6-knight: **32 Rxf5!** (not 32 Rf1? Rxd5!, with an unclear position, as Black has reasonable compensation for the exchange) **32… Rxf5 33 Bxe6+ +–** and White will be a bishop up.

back



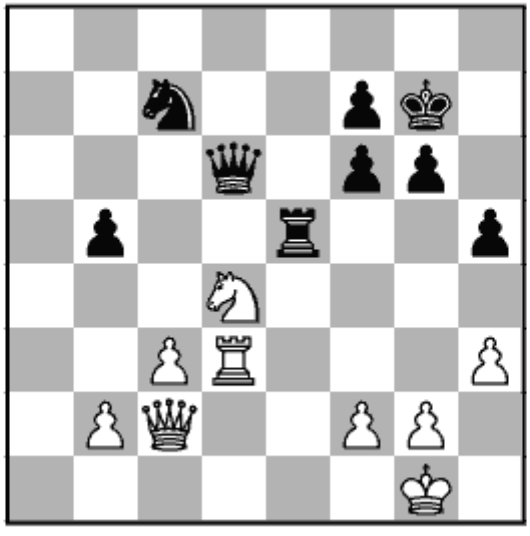
Solution 377: White to play

Liu Yan – Idani

Tianjin 2018/19

Thanks to the exposed king on f6, White can leave the bishop to be taken on f2 and save his rook: **28 Rh1!** (the exchange-down position after 28 Bg1? Nxh2 –+ is hopeless for White) **28…Nxf2 29 Rf1 =** with a roughly equal position.

back



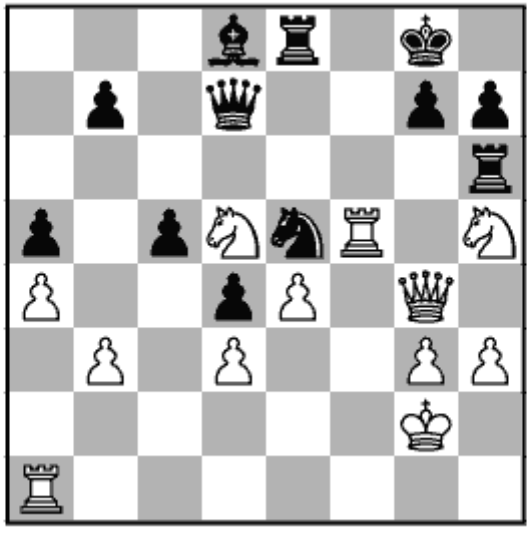
Solution 378: White to play

S.Peng – Korley (variation)

Burlingame 2019

A discovered attack wins the queen, but only if it comes with check: **34 Nf5+** (not 34 Nf3? Rd5 =) **34…Rxf5 35 Rxd6 +–**.

back



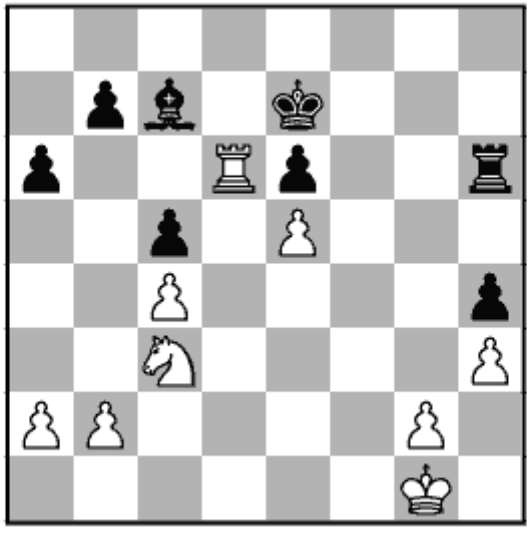
Solution 379: White to play

Pranav – K.Trisha

Mumbai 2018/19

Since the white queen is protected, **30 Rxe5!** wins. After **30… Qxg4**, the zwischenzug (‘in-between move’) **31 Rxe8+ Kf7 32 hxg4** +– leaves White a piece up.

back

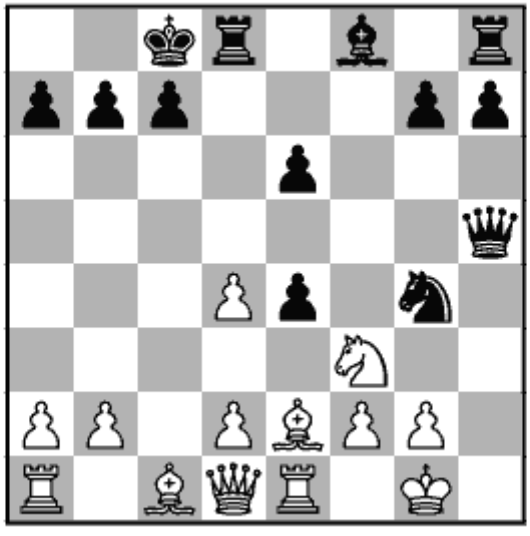


Solution 380: White to play

Training position

White can exploit the fact that only the black pawn on e6 separates the rooks on d6 and h6. In other words, a fork based on a pin wins the exchange: **1 Nd5+! exd5 2 Rxh6** +– and White wins easily.

back



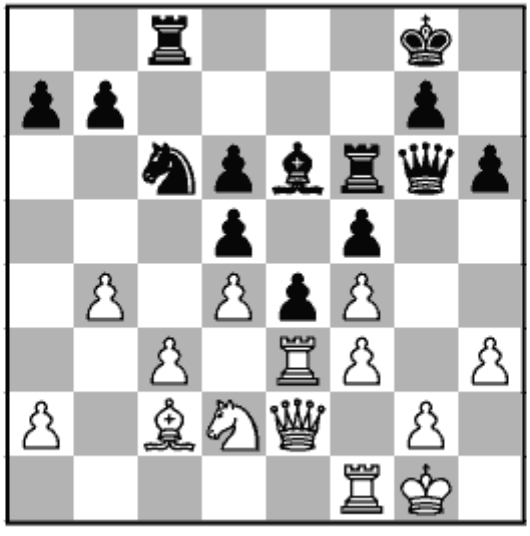
Solution 381: White to play

Raghunandan – Deshpande

Mumbai 2018/19

White wants to rescue his knight without allowing mate. There is a way: **13 Nh4! Qxh4 14 Bxg4 +–** and the mating threats are history but the extra piece remains.

back



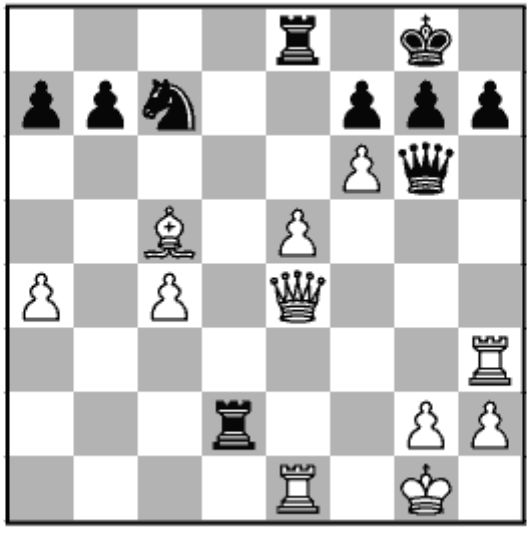
Solution 382: Black to play

B.Stoyanov – Kearsley

Hastings 2018/19

If the c3-pawn were to vanish, the bishop on c2 would be loose. But Black needs to find the most forcing way to bring this about. **21…Nxd4!** (at a glance 21…Nxb4? might seem just as effective, but 22 Bb3 gives White a good position) **22 cxd4 Rxc2 –+** with an extra pawn and a decisive advantage.

back



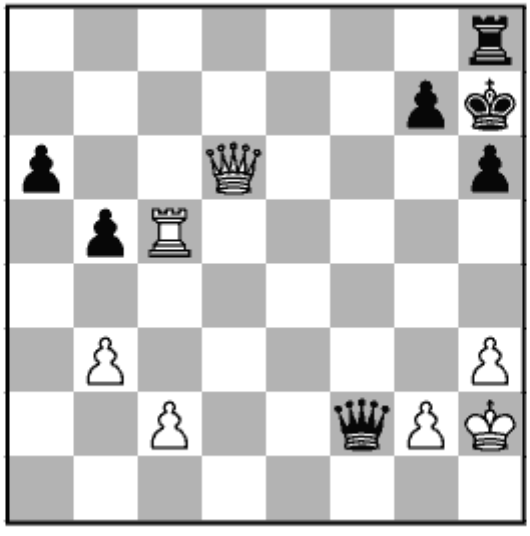
Solution 383: Black to play

Wang Xiaoyan – Lu Miaoyi (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

As the white queen is tied to the defence of g2, Black can smash through on e5: **26…Rxe5! –+** leaves White defenceless. Either he loses his queen or is mated: 27 Qxg6 Rxe1# or 27 Qxe5 Qxg2#.

back



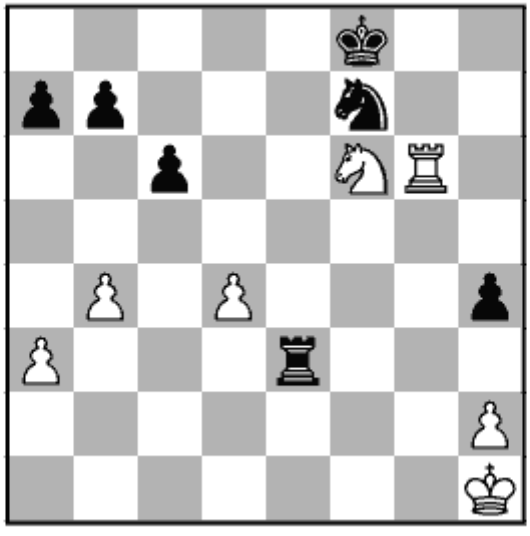
Solution 384: White to play

R.Shah – Kafle (based on)

Mumbai 2018/19

After two checks, White wins: **27 Qd3+! Kg8** (or 27…g6 28 Rc7+ +–) **28 Rc8+ +–**.

back



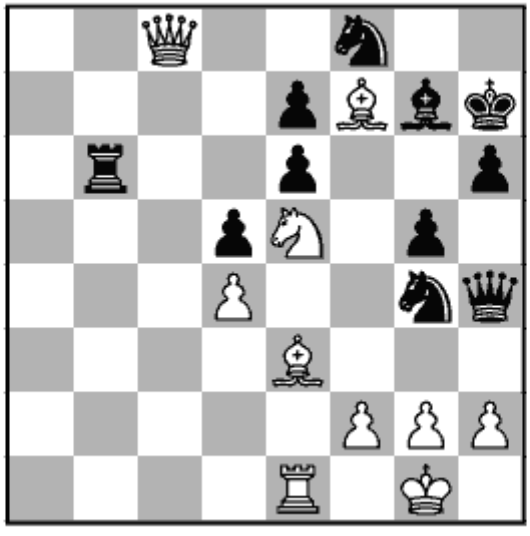
Solution 385: White to play

Hillarp Persson – Gholami

Stockholm 2018/19

33 Rg8+! Ke7 34 Re8+ Kxf6 35 Rxe3 +– and an exchange to the good, White wins easily.

back



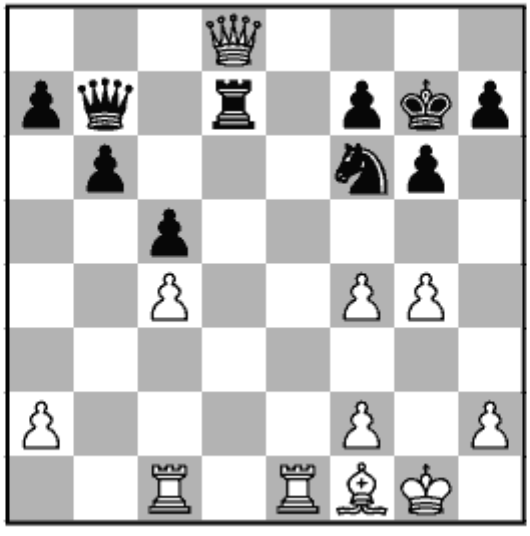
Solution 386: White to play

Samant – Movsziszian

Mumbai 2018/19

Black resigned after **36 Nf3!**. There is no way to save the queen, so it is game over. Instead after 36 Qc2+? Kh8 37 Nf3 Nxe3! White has squandered his chance.

back



Solution 387: White to play

Senthil – Anuj

Mumbai 2018/19

If the queen has no immediate escape, the only option is to counterattack: **26 Bg2!** (not 26 Rcd1? Rxd8 27 Rxd8 Qc7 –+) **26…Qxg2+ 27 Kxg2 Rxd8 28 Rcd1** +– and an exchange to the good, White wins easily.

back

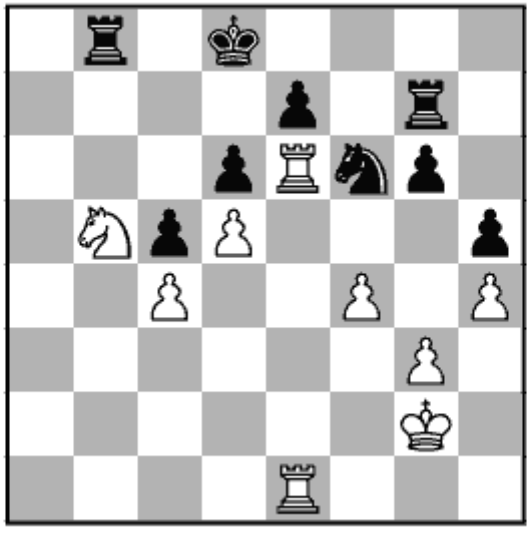
Solution 388: White to play

An.Larsen – Gu In

Hastings 2018/19

White can use a pin to win a piece: **17 Qd5+! Qd6** (avoiding the queen exchange doesn't save Black either: 17…Kc7 18 Qxe6 Nxg4 19 Qxg4 +–) **18 Bxe6+ +–** with an extra bishop and an easy win.

back



Solution 389: Black to play

Ameir – Visakh

Mumbai 2018/19

Since the c4-pawn is tied to the defence of the knight on b5, Black can pick up the pawn on d5: **49…Nxd5!** (as played in the game) **50 cxd5** (even worse is 50 Nxd6?! Nc7 –+, when rather than a mere pawn, White has lost the exchange) **50… Rxb5** –/+ with an extra pawn and good chances to win.

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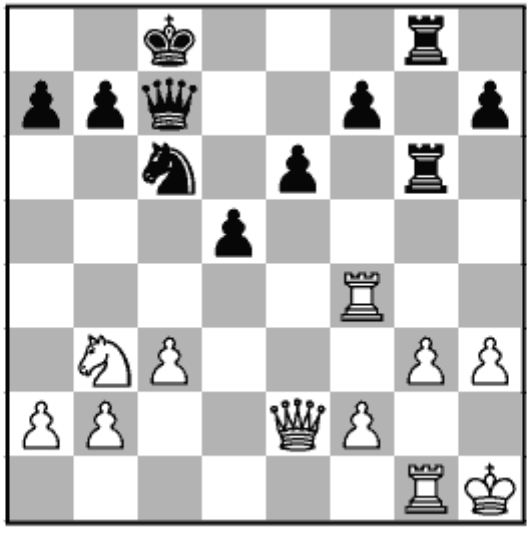


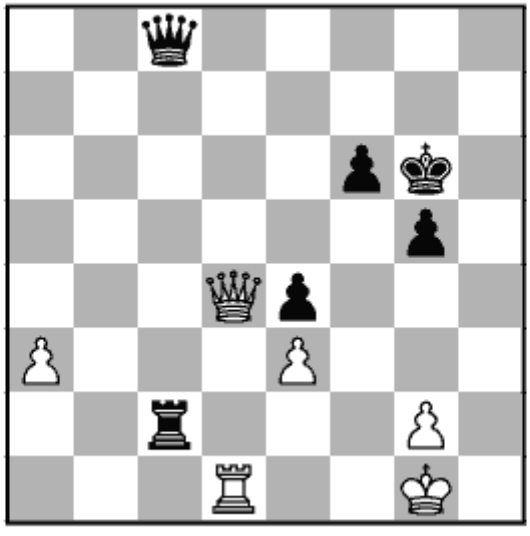
Solution 390: Black to play

Mahindrakar – Akash (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White loses the rook on f4 because of its undefended colleague on g1: **27…Qxf4! 28 gxf4 Rxg1+ 29 Kh2 R8g2#**.

back



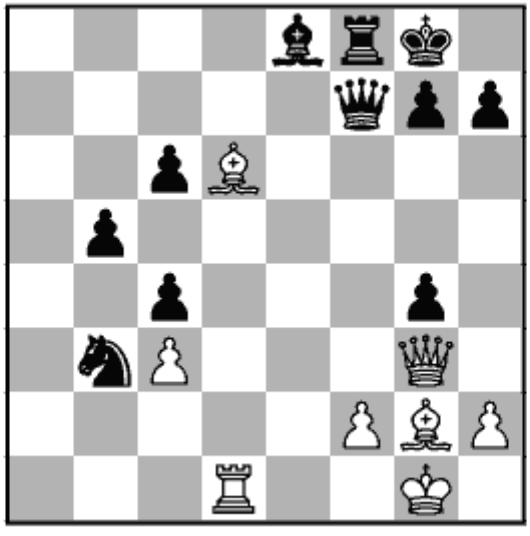
Solution 391: Black to play

Babujian – Kravtsiv (based on)

Erevan 2013

A single pawn often proves to be insufficient cover for a king:
45…Qg4! 46 Rd2 Rc1+ 47 Kf2 Qh4+ with mate next move.

back



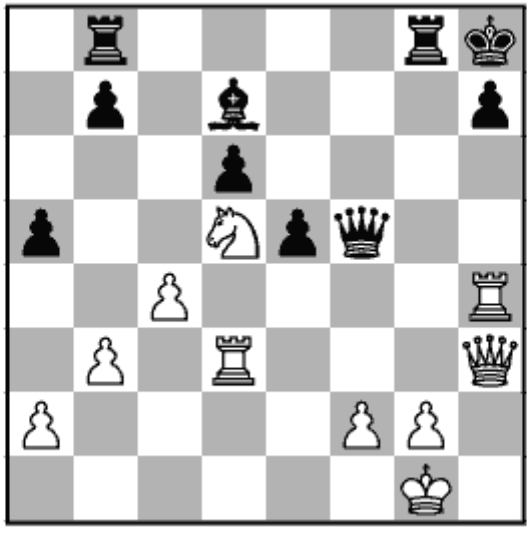
Solution 392: Black to play

C.Wheeler – Polgar-Shutzman (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black saves his rook using a pin: **29…Qd7! 30 h3 h5** (30… Rf6!? –+) **31 hxg4 hxg4 –+**.

back



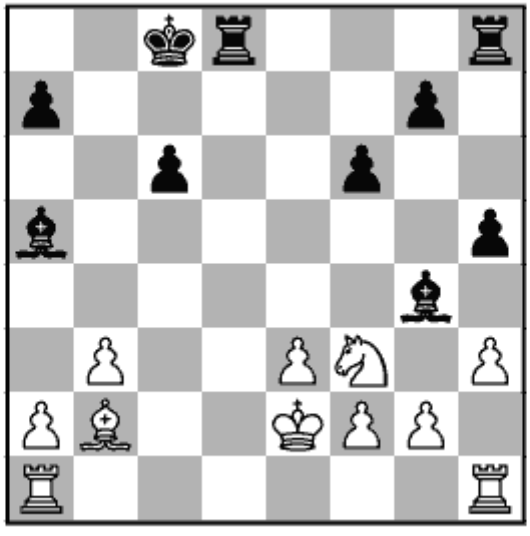
Solution 393: Black to play

Harmon-Vellotti – J.Williams (variation)

Burlingame 2019

The pin on the g2-pawn means that White loses an exchange on h3: **37…Qxh3!** (37…Qg6? 38 Qg3 =) **38 Rhxh3 Bxh3 39 Rxh3 b5** with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 394: Black to play

Saidy – Kung (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black wins thanks to the pin: **22…Rd2+! 23 Kf1 Bxf3 24 gxf3 Rxb2 –+**.

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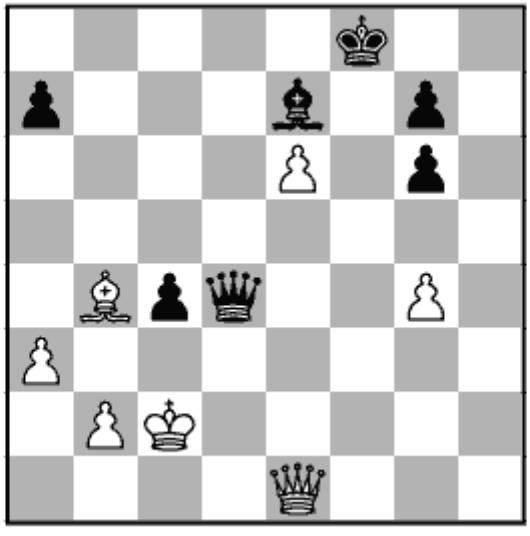

Solution 395: White to play

B.Jacobson – Ali Marandi (variation)

Burlingame 2019

43 Qf1+! (Black loses his bishop or the c4-pawn) **43…Qf6 44 Qxc4 +–**.

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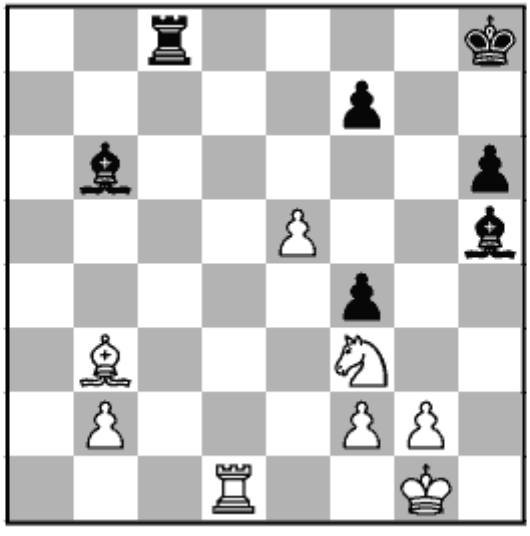


Solution 396: White to play

Y.Liou – R.Kaufman

Burlingame 2019

White wins a pawn and the game with a double attack: **40 Rd6! Rc1+** (40…Bxf3 41 Rxb6 +–) **41 Kh2 Bxf3** and after **42 Rxb6** Black resigned. White also gets a decisive advantage with 42 Rxh6+ Kg7 43 Rxb6 +–.

back

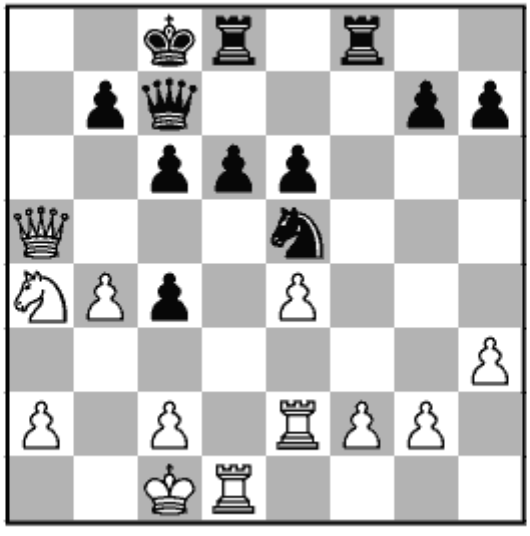
Solution 397: White to play

Ankit – Kravtsiv (variation)

Nagpur 2012

26 Rxd3! Rxd3 27 Kxf2 +– with a decisive advantage.

back



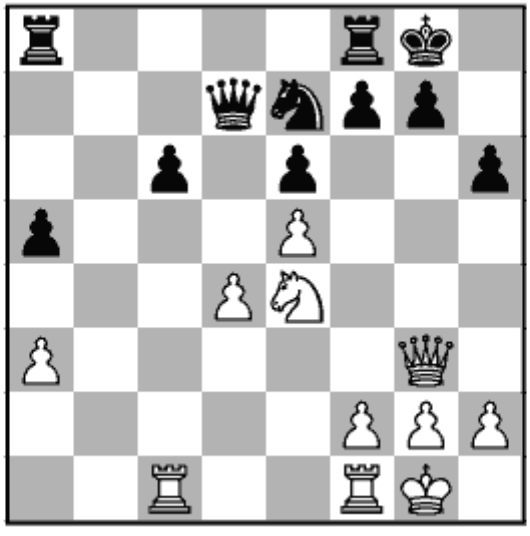
Solution 398: White to play

Kravtsiv – Rzayev (variation)

Kazan tt 2013

After **24 Nb6+!** Black loses his queen or is mated: **24…Kb8** (24…Qxb6 25 Qxb6 +–) **25 Qa8#**.

back



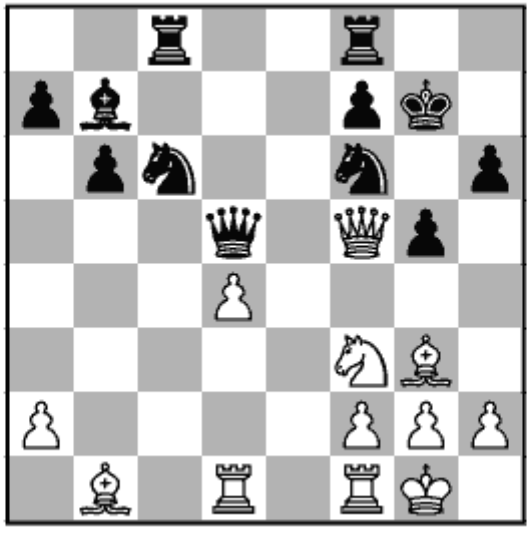
Solution 399: White to play

J.Wang – S.Peng (variation)

Burlingame 2019

The queen is unfortunately placed on d7: **25 Nf6+! Kh8 26 Nxd7 +–**.

back



Solution 400: White to play

Zilka – Kravtsiv (variation)

Erevan 2013

21 Be5! wins because there's no good answer to the mate threat on h7: **21…Nxe5** (21…Qe6 22 Qh7#) **22 dxe5** +–.

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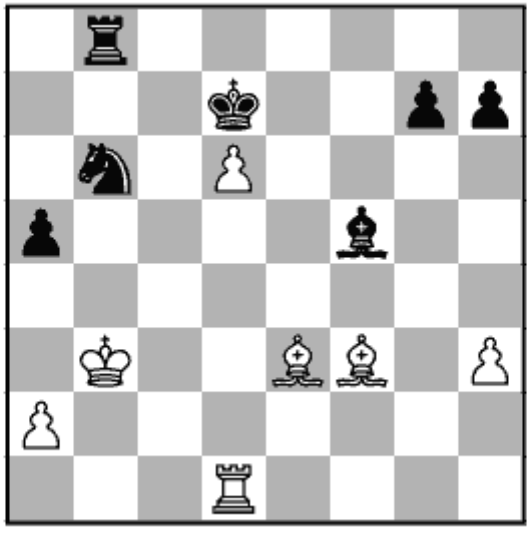


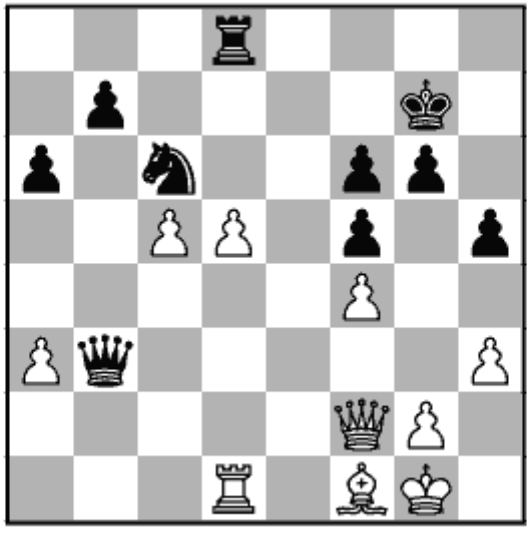
Solution 401: Black to play

Daggupati – Abrahamyan (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black should not be distracted by the h3-pawn, as there is bigger game to hunt: **33…Nd5+!** (33…Bxh3? 34 Kc3 =+) **34 Ka3 Nxe3** –+ wins a bishop.

back



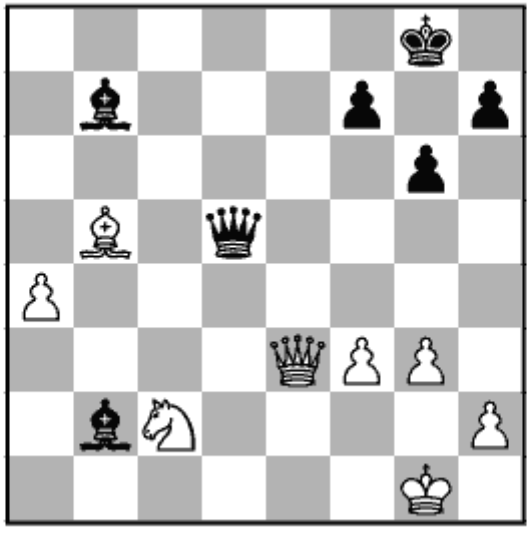
Solution 402: White to play

Kravtsiv – Ankit

Chennai 2012

With **31 Rd3!** White solves the problem of his loose rook with tempo, so next move he will take the knight. After **31…Qb1** Black resigned in view of **32 dxc6** (or 32 Qe3!? +–) **32… Rxd3 33 c7** +–.

back



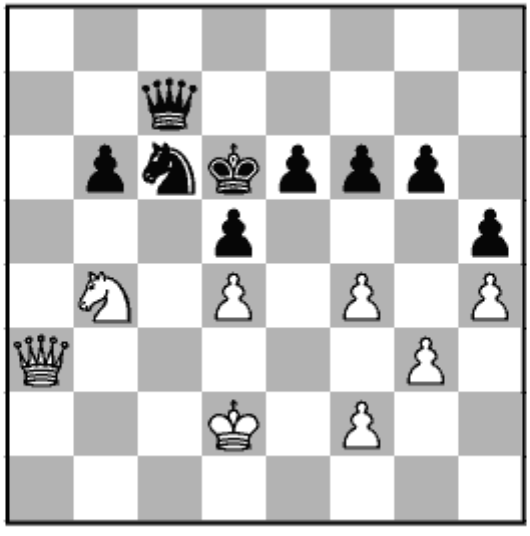
Solution 403: Black to play

Vigneshwaran – Kravtsiv (variation)

Chennai 2012

Rather than a mere pawn on f3, Black can pick up the white knight: **41…Qd1+!** (now White can't save the knight without losing his queen; 41…Qxf3? 42 Qxf3 =) **42 Ne1** (42 Kf2 Qxc2+ –+) **42…Bd4 –+**.

back



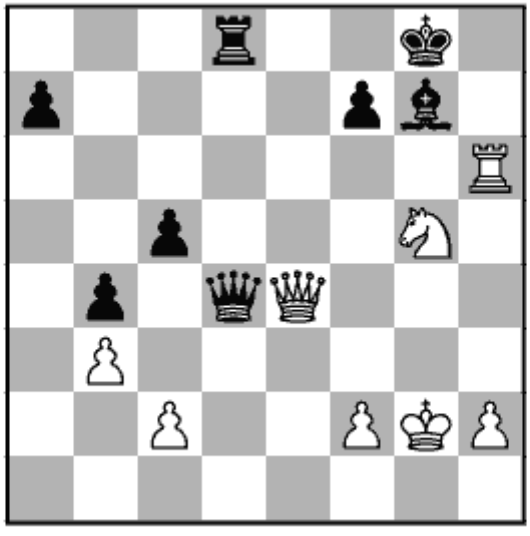
Solution 404: White to play

Ragger – Kravtsiv (variation)

European Ch, Legnica 2013

A discovered check wins the black queen: **38 Na6+ Kd7 39 Nxc7 +–**.

back



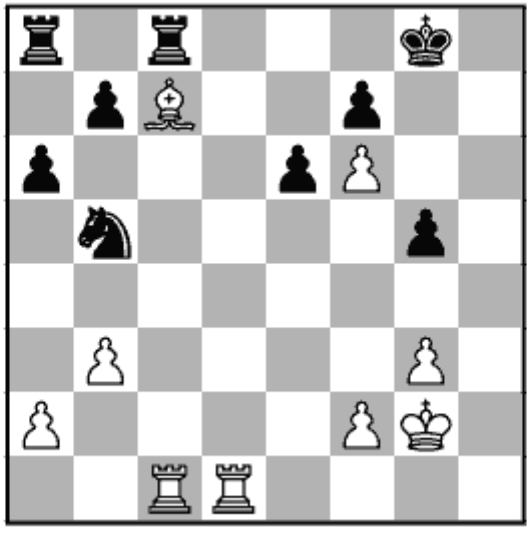
Solution 405: White to play

Kett – Dong Bao

British League (4NCL) 2018/19

White delivers a beautiful mate: **33 Rh8+!** and Black resigned in view of **33…Bxh8 34 Qh7+ Kf8 35 Qxf7#**.

back



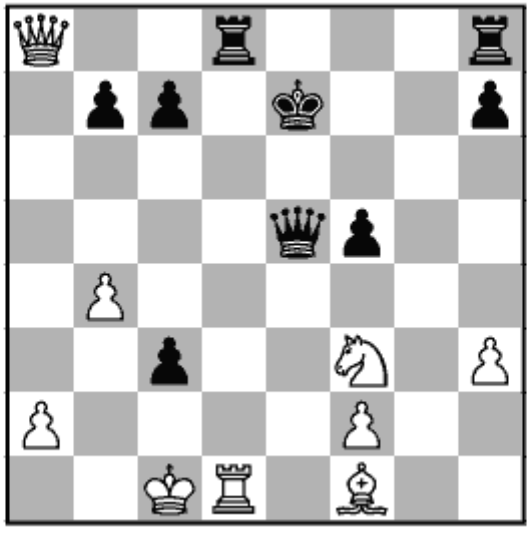
Solution 406: White to play

Javakhishvili – Guichard (variation)

French Team Ch 2019

37 Rc5! Rxc7 (37…e5 38 Rxe5 changes nothing) **38 Rxg5+ Kf8 39 Rh5! Kg8 40 Rdh1**, mating.

back



Solution 407: White to play

Rathnakaran – Mahindrakar

Mumbai 2018/19

A common way to win material is with a zwischenzug (an 'in-between move'), especially one that gives check.

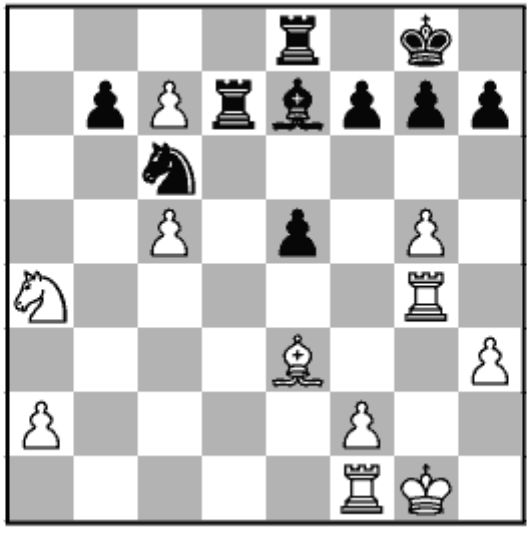
27 Qxd8+!

White misses his chance with either 27 Rxd8? Qf4+ (Black escapes with his own zwischenzug!) 28 Kc2 Rxd8 or 27 Nxe5? Rxd1+ 28 Kxd1 Rxa8, with unclear play in both cases.

27…Rxd8 28 Nxe5 +–

with an easy win.

back

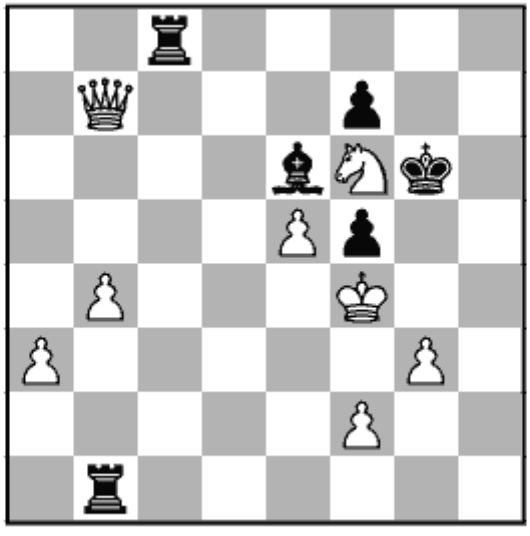


Solution 408: White to play

Training position

White can’t save the c7-pawn, but he can use it to set up a fork of the black rooks: **1 c8Q! Rxc8 2 Nb6 +–** with an extra exchange and a decisive advantage.

back



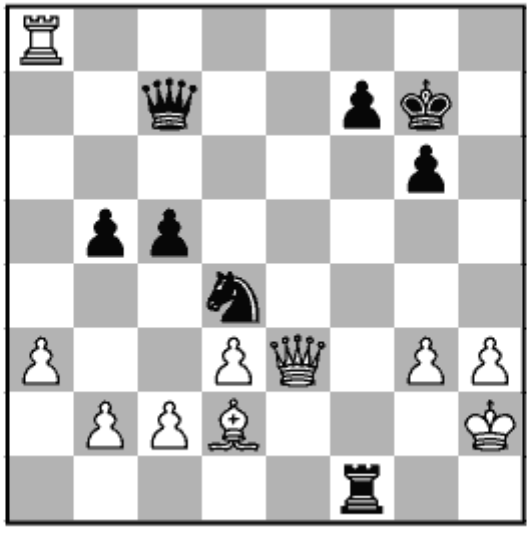
Solution 409: Black to play

Chen Fan – Nie Xinyang (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

After **29…Rb3!** White has no defence against the threat of 30…Rc4+. He can give up his queen by **30 Qa6** (or 30 f3 Rc4+ 31 Ne4 fxe4 32 fxe4 Rcc3 with mate to follow) **30… Rc4+ 31 Qxc4 Bxc4 –+** but this is hopeless. Instead 29… Rc4+? 30 Kf3 +– lets the king escape its prison.

back



Solution 410: Black to play

T.Dahl – Valkama (variation)

Stockholm 2018/19

39…Nf3+!

39…Qc6? allows 40 Qh6+ (40 Qe5+? Rf6 –+) 40…Kf6 41 Qh8+ Ke6 (41…Kf5 42 g4+ Ke6 43 Re8+ =) 42 Re8+ Kd7 43 Rd8+ = with perpetual check.

40 Kg2 Rg1+ 41 Kxf3

41 Qxg1 Nxg1 –+.

41…Rxg3+ –+

with a decisive advantage.

back

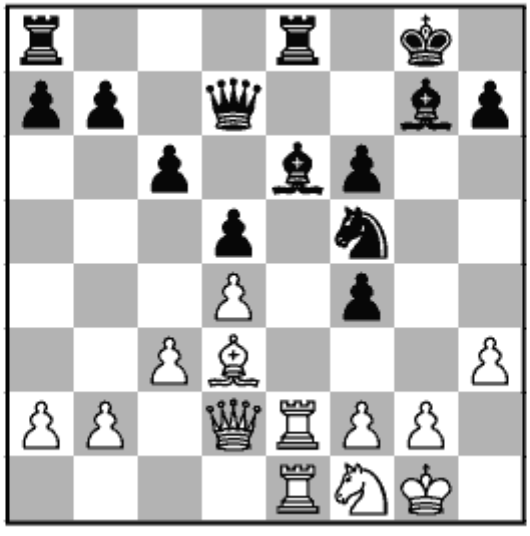
Solution 411: White to play

Hillarp Persson – Karthikeyan

Stockholm 2018/19

With the help of a couple of knight checks, White wins the enemy queen: **20 Ne7+ Kh8 21 Nfg6+** with a decisive material advantage no matter how Black takes: **21…Qxg6** (21…fxg6 22 Bxh6 +–; 21…hxg6 22 Bxh6 +–) **22 Bxg6 +–**.

back



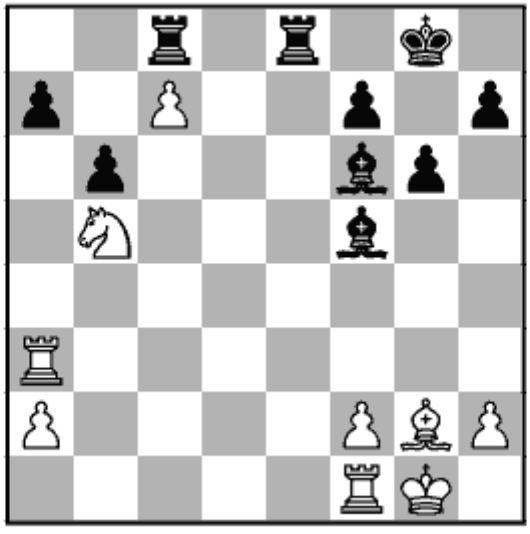
Solution 412: White to play

Kravtsiv – Goganov (variation)

Erevan 2013

White needs to remove the defender of the f5-knight: **22 Rxe6! Nd6** (22…Rxe6 23 Bxf5 +–) **23 Rxe8+ Rxe8 24 Rxe8+ Qxe8 25 Qxf4 +–** with a decisive advantage.

back



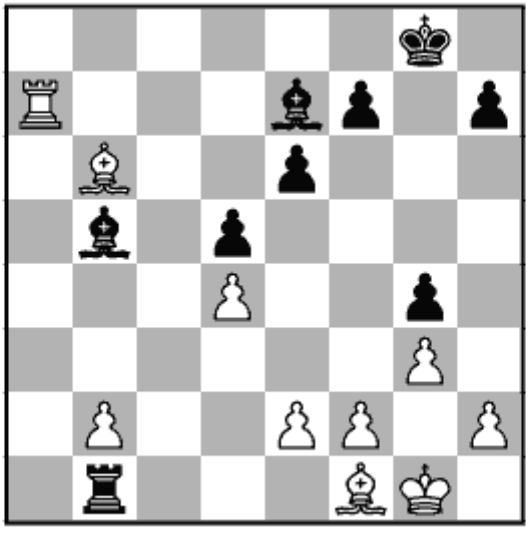
Solution 413: Black to play

S.Kusnetsov – Lewicki

Krakow 2018/19

White intends 32 Nd6, so Black needs to remove the rook from e8. He played **31…Re5!**, when after **32 Rb3** (32 Bc6 Rc5! –+; 32 Nxa7 Rxc7 –+) **32…Bd7** Black will take the pawn on c7, gaining a decisive plus. **33 Nxa7?** is no good due to **33…Rxc7 –+**.

back



Solution 414: White to play

Navin – Kravtsiv (variation)

Chennai 2012

White must address Black's threat to take on e2.

29 Kg2!

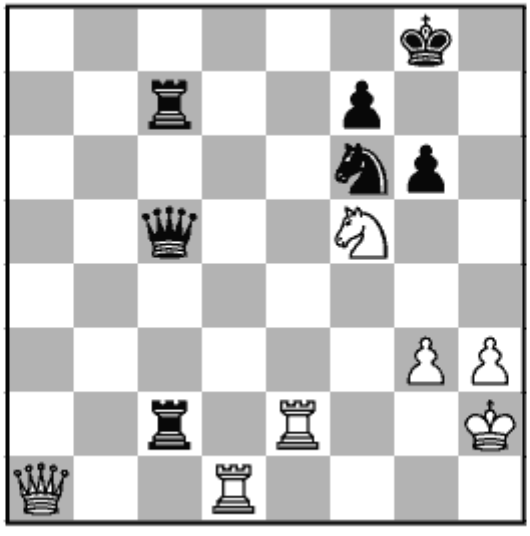
29 Rxe7? fails due to 29…Bxe2 –+ with mate threats. Inserting 29 Ra8+? Kg7 before playing 30 Kg2 Rxb2 –+ is no good because the loose bishop on b6 means that White can't save his pawn on e2.

29…Bf6

29…Bg5 30 Bc5 Rxb2 31 Rb7 =.

30 Bc5 Rxb2 31 e3 =

back

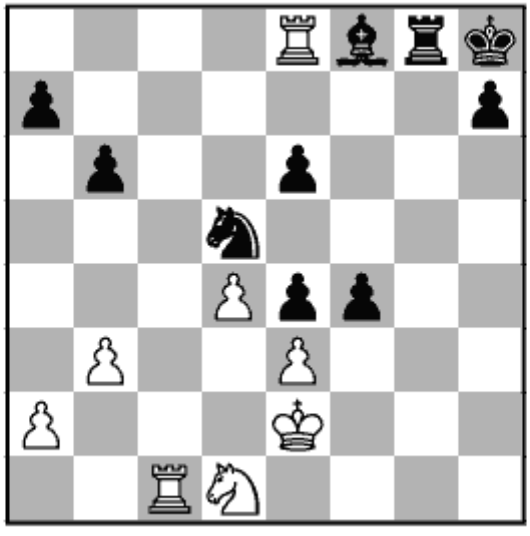


Solution 415: White to play

Training position

A simple but beautiful sequence wins: **1 Rd8+** (1 Nd4? Rxe2+ 2 Nxe2 Qf2+ –+) **1…Kh7** (1…Qf8 2 Rxf8+ Kxf8 3 Rxc2 Rxc2+ 4 Kg1 +–) **2 Rh8+! Kxh8 3 Qxf6+** +–, mating.

back



Solution 416: White to play

V.Larsson – Ziegler

Stockholm 2018/19

To win the game, White must place his hopes on the pin on Black's back rank.

38 Rcc8!

38 exf4? Nxf4+ 39 Kf1 (as played in the game; 39 Ke3 changes nothing: 39…Nd5+ 40 Ke2 Nf4+) 39…Bb4 40 Rxg8+ Kxg8 and Black should hold the draw.

38…f3+

Or: 38…Kg7 39 Rxe6 +–; 38…Rg2+ 39 Nf2!? (this move wins immediately) 39…f3+ (39…fxe3 40 Rxf8+ Kg7 41 Rg8+ +–) 40 Ke1 +–.

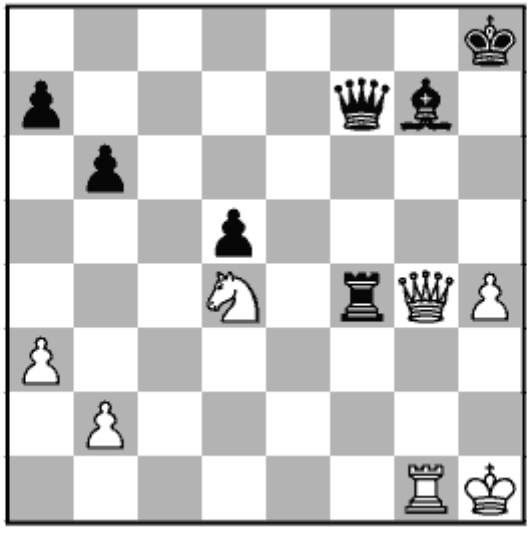
39 Kf1 Kg7

39…Ne7 is met by 40 Ra8 Bh6 (40…Kg7 41 Nf2 +–) 41 Rxg8+ Nxg8 42 Rxa7 +–.

40 Rxe6 +–

The pawns on e4 and f3 will both drop off.

back



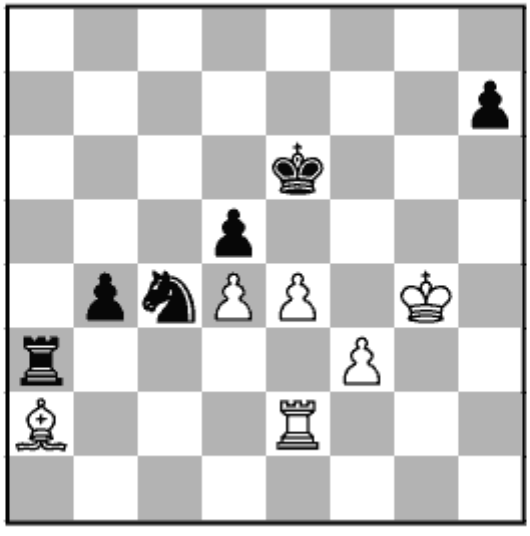
Solution 417: White to play

Torngren – J.Jönsson

Stockholm 2018/19

37 Qxg7+! (not 37 Qc8+? Kh7 –+) **37…Qxg7 38 Rxg7 Rxh4+** (38…Kxg7? 39 Ne6+) **39 Kg2** (the black rook has evaded a knight fork on e6, but there is another one on f5!) **39…Rxd4** (the game featured 39…Kxg7? 40 Nf5+ +–) **40 Rxa7** with an equal position.

back



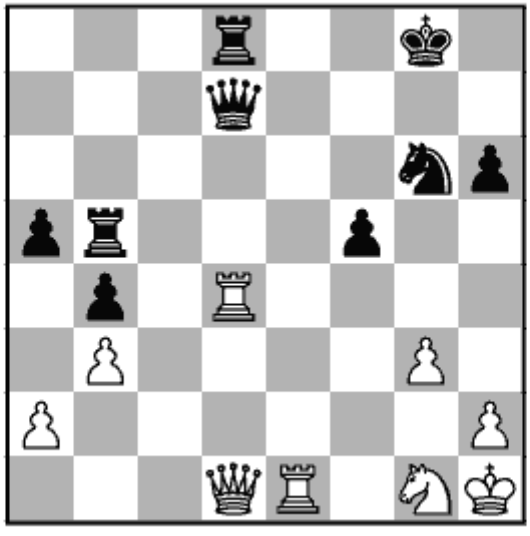
Solution 418: White to play

Ratnesan – D.Graham

Hastings 2018/19

White can win the knight thanks to a pin: **52 exd5++ Kxd5 53 Re5+! Kxd4 54 Re4+ Kc3** (or 54…Kc5 55 Bxc4! b3 56 Bd3 +–, as in the game) **55 Bxc4 b3 56 Bxb3 +–** with an easy win. The f-pawn is unstoppable.

back



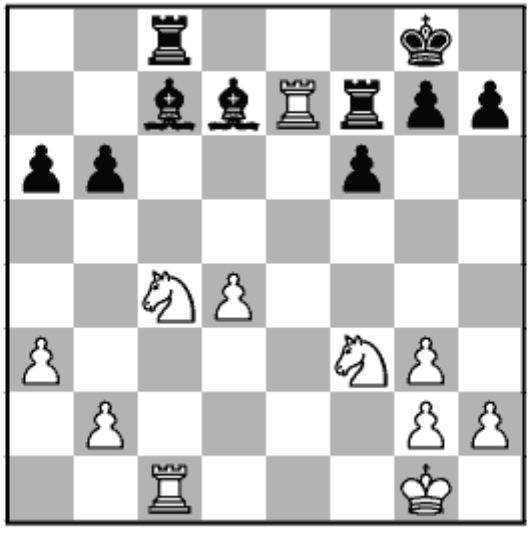
Solution 419: Black to play

S.Chowdhury – Srihari

Mumbai 2018/19

Even in a won position, you need to pay close attention to the opponent's ideas. The careless 35…Qxd4? would allow White to resist by 36 Re8+! Kf7 37 Rxd8 Qe4+ 38 Qf3. After the correct **35…Qb7+!** White resigned since after **36 Nf3** (36 Qf3 Rxd4 –+) **36…Rxd4 37 Qxd4 Qxf3+ –+** there is no hope any more.

back



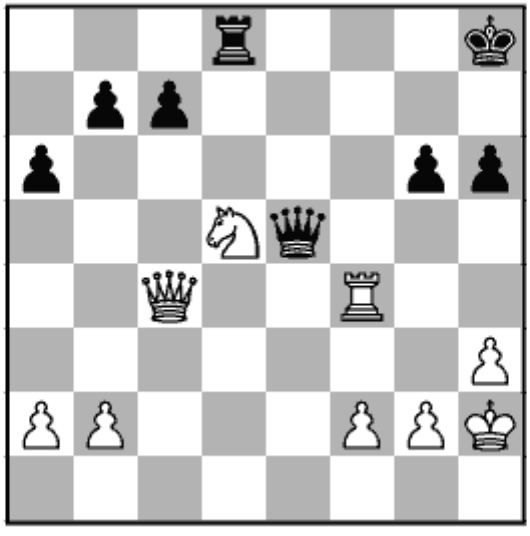
Solution 420: White to play

Park Sijoon – M.Wilson

Hastings 2018/19

White achieves victory with an attractive blow: **29 Rxd7!** (after 29 Rxf7? Kxf7 White has little if any real advantage) **29…Rxd7 30 Nxb6 Bxb6 31 Rxc8+ Kf7 32 Rc4** +– with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 421: Black to play

Vaishali – Nesterov

Stockholm 2018/19

With exposed kings, an exchange of queens is a vital strategic factor.

31…g5!

After 31…Rxd5? 32 g3 +/– Black has major problems due to his vulnerable king. For example, 32…Qd6 33 Qc3+ Kg8 34 Rf6 or 32…c5 33 Re4 Qf5 34 Re8+.

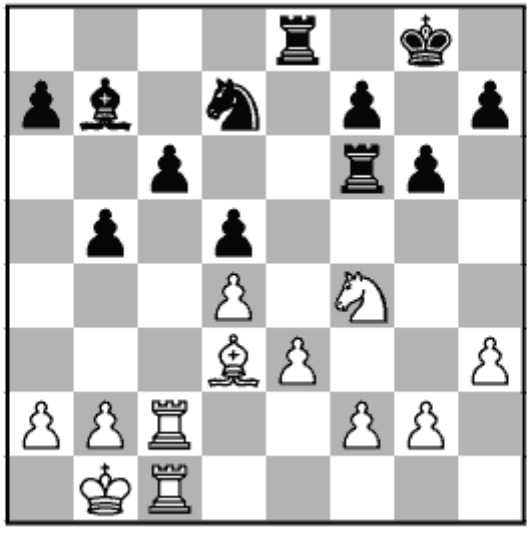
32 Qd4 Rxd5

32…Qxd4 33 Rxd4 c6 34 Rb4 +=.

33 Qxe5+ Rxe5

with an equal position.

back



Solution 422: White to play

Stabulnieks – Dauth

Stockholm 2018/19

Breaking through to c7 is well worth a piece!

23 Bxb5!

The right way. After 23 Nxd5?! cxd5 24 Rc7 Rxf2 White must settle for a far smaller advantage.

23…g5

23…cxb5 24 Rc7 +–.

24 Nd3

Rather than 24 Nh5?! cxb5 25 Rc7 Rxf2 26 Rxb7 Nf6 +/– with chances of a draw.

24…cxb5 25 Rc7 +–

White regains the piece and will win the game.

back

Solution 423: White to play

An.Larsen – O.Willson

Hastings 2018/19

White sees a chance to use a standard form of the Greek Gift idea, where the bishop sacrifice is followed by a knight check to open the h-file.

14 Nxf6+ Bxf6

14…gxf6!? is a slightly more stubborn defence. 15 Ng5! (15 Bh6, as played in the game, lets Black fight on with 15…f5, though White should win in the end) 15…fxg5 16 hxg5 Bxg5 17 Qh5!? (a good 'human' method, though the computer prefers 17 Bxh7+ Kg7 18 Qh5! Bxc1 19 Rxc1 +–) 17…h6 18 f4 +–.

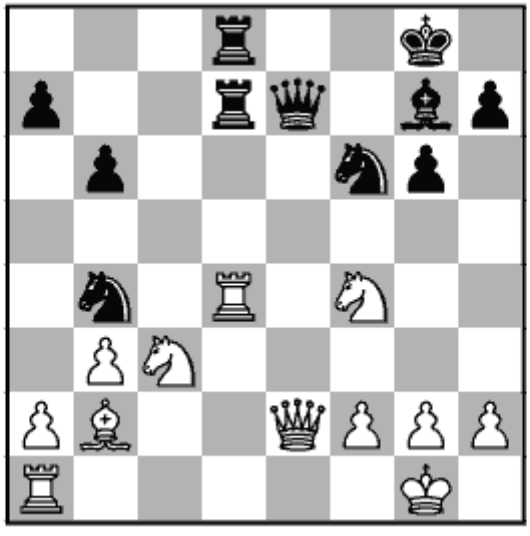
15 Bxh7+! Kxh7

15…Kh8 16 Bc2 +–.

16 Ng5+ Kg8 17 Qh5 +–

Black will be mated.

back



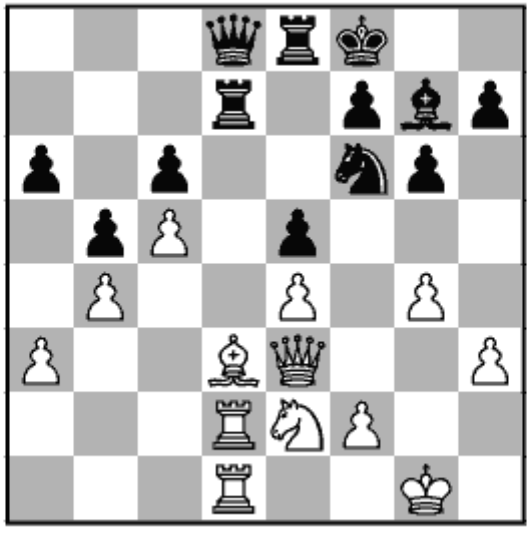
Solution 424: Black to play

M.Armstrong – Carulla Pons

Hastings 2018/19

It's confusing to have so many pieces eyeing the central squares, but if you remove the queens, everything becomes much clearer: **24…Qxe2!** (24…Nfd5? lets White escape by 25 Qxe7 Nxe7 26 Rxd7 =) **25 Ncxe2 Nfd5** and White loses a piece or the exchange: **26 Ne6** (26 Nxd5 Bxd4 –+; 26 Rd2 Nxf4 –+) **26…Bxd4 27 N2xd4 Re8 –+**.

back



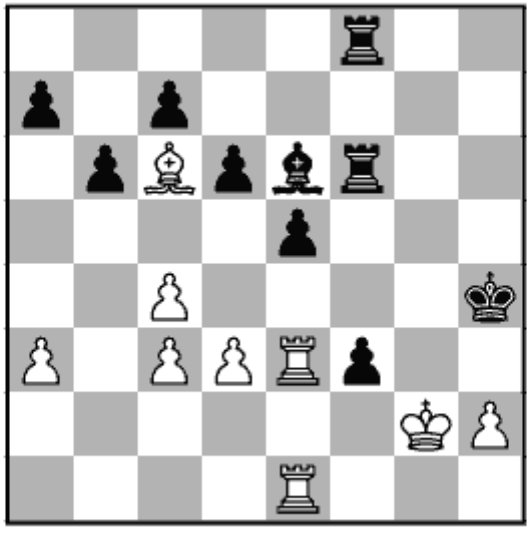
Solution 425: White to play

B.Stoyanov – Park Sijoon

Hastings 2018/19

The queen is unfortunately placed on d8 since after an exchange of rooks it will come under attack, allowing White to engineer a deadly discovered attack: **23 g5! Nh5** (23…Ng8 24 Bxb5 +–) **24 Bxb5!** (now that the knight no longer protects d7, this tactic picks up a pawn for White) **24…Rxd2 25 Rxd2 Qc8 26 Bc4 +–**.

back



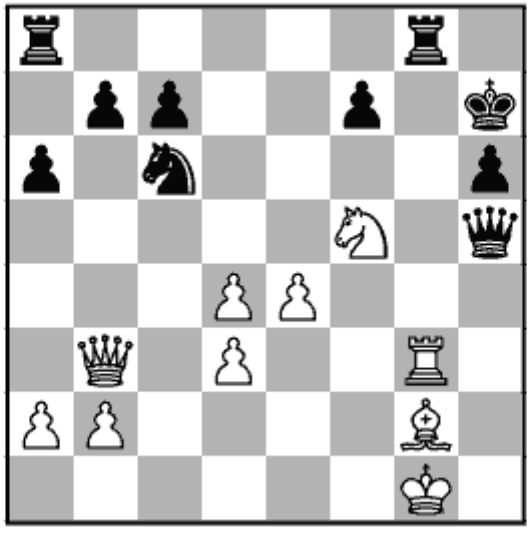
Solution 426: White to play

Jaksland – Vestby-Ellingsen

Stockholm 2018/19

As long as White realizes he can't take the pawn right away, he should find the way to save the game: **34 Kf2!** (34 Bxf3? loses to 34…Bh3+ 35 Kf2 Bg4 –+, while in the game 34 Rxf3? Rxf3 35 Bxf3 Bh3+ 36 Kf2 Bg4 37 Re3 Kh3 –+ gave Black an easy win) **34…Rf4** (34…Bh3 35 d4! =) **35 Rg1** and White is only a little worse.

back



Solution 427: White to play

Ruane – Kolani

Hastings 2018/19

White's hopes of salvation lie in the exposed position of the black king.

30 Rh3!

After 30 Qxb7?, as played in the game, Black can win in several ways, of which the most precise is 30…Nxd4! 31 Rxg8 Rxg8 32 Nxd4 Qg4 –+.

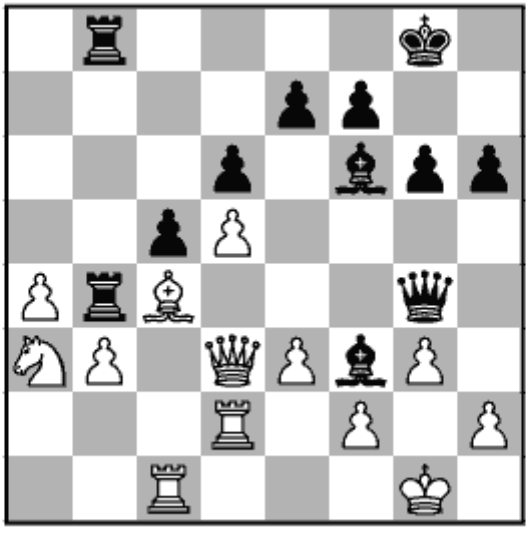
30…Qxh3

30…Rxg2+ 31 Kxg2 Rg8+ 32 Kf2 (or 32 Rg3 =) 32…Qxh3 33 Qxf7+ =.

31 Qxf7+ Kh8 32 Qf6+ Kh7 33 Qf7+ =

with perpetual check.

back



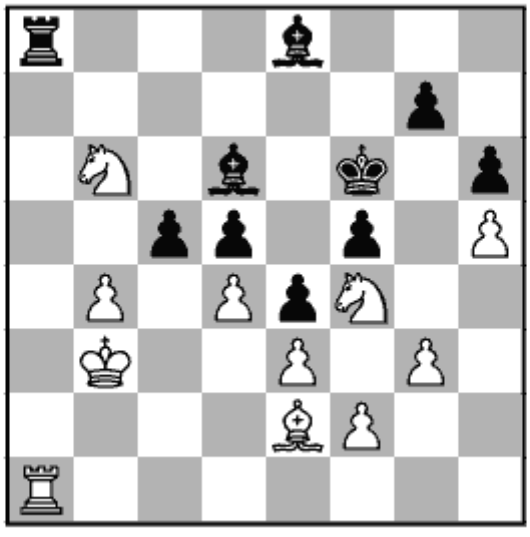
Solution 428: Black to play

Hu Zehua – M.Popov

Tianjin 2018/19

To mate the enemy king, Black needs to deflect the white queen: **32…Rxb3!!** (32…Qh3? 33 Qf1 is unclear) **33 Bxb3 Rxb3 34 Qc4** (or 34 Qxb3 Qh3, mating) **34…Qh3!?** (34…Rxa3 –+) **35 Qf1 Qxf1+ 36 Kxf1 Rxa3 –+** and White soon resigned.

back



Solution 429: Black to play

C.Byrn – Groffen

Hastings 2018/19

Black mustn't allow White connected passed pawns.

34…c4+!

After 34…Rxa1? 35 Nfxd5+ (as played in the game) 35…Kf7 36 bxc5 Bb8 37 Bc4 Kf8 38 Nf4 +– White's pawns are unstoppable.

35 Kc3

35 Kb2 leads to a similar situation after 35…c3+! 36 Kxc3 (36 Kb1 c2+ is unclear) 36…Rxa1 37 Nfxd5+ Kf7 with unclear play.

35…Rxa1 36 Nfxd5+

36 Nbxd5+ Kf7 37 Bxc4 Bxf4 is again unclear.

36…Kf7 37 Bxc4 Kf8

with a roughly equal position and practical chances for both sides.

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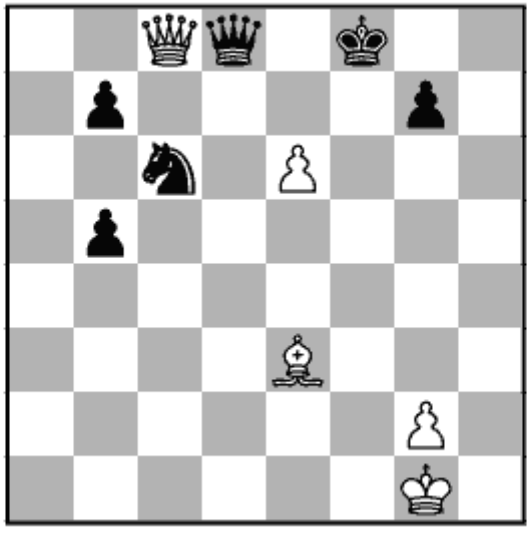


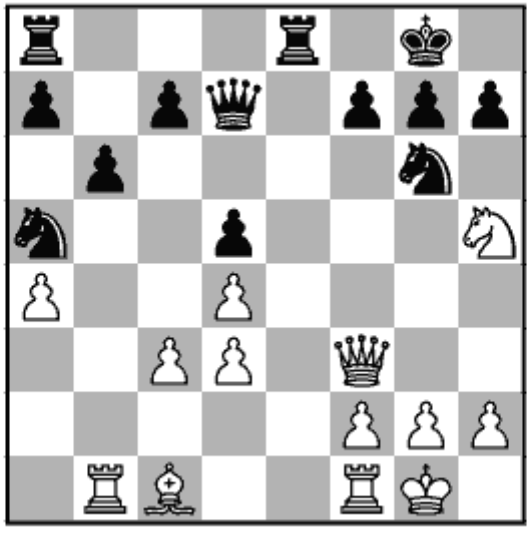
Solution 430: White to play

Kravtsiv – Mooketsi (based on)

Kazan tt 2013

A pawn sacrifice draws the king to e7, and into a fatal skewer: **39 e7+!** (not 39 Qxb7? Qd1+ =) **39…Kxe7 40 Bg5+ +–**.

back



Solution 431: White to play

Balasubramaniam – Lugovskoi

Mumbai 2018/19

With **16 Bh6!** White wins the g7-pawn, after which Black's position will be completely hopeless: **16…Nh4** (16…Qxa4 17 Nxg7 Red8 18 Qf6 +–; 16…f5 17 Bxg7 +–) **17 Qg3** (thus far as played in the game) **17…Ng6 18 Nxg7 +–**.

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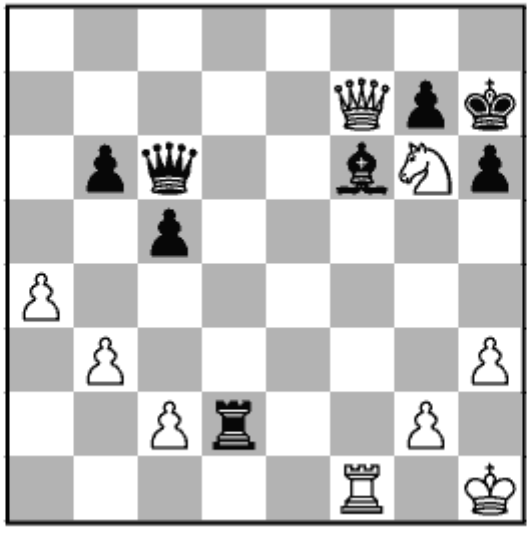

Solution 432: White to play

P.Patil – Srihari (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White wins the game with a beautiful manoeuvre: **38 Nf8+** (38 Nf4? Qe4 is unclear) **38…Kh8 39 Qg6 Kg8 40 Nh7** and Black must either lose his bishop or enter a hopeless pawn ending: **40…Rd6 41 Nxf6+** +–.

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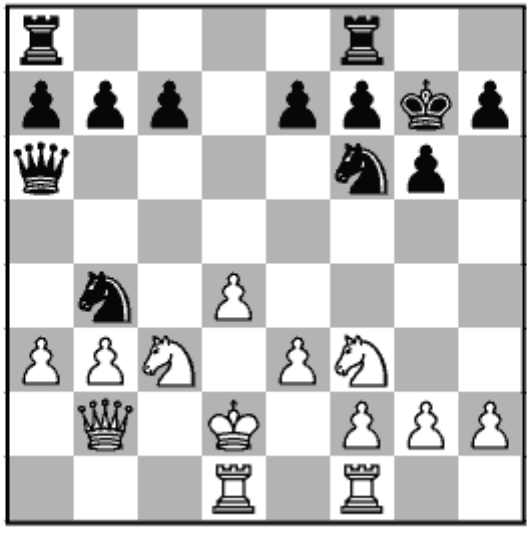

Solution 433: Black to play

Tran Minh – N.Mohammad

Mumbai 2018/19

Black can drive the white king into a fork: **18…Qd3+ 19 Kc1** (19 Ke1 Nc2+ –+) **19…Qxf1! 20 Rxf1** (20 axb4 Qxg2 –+) **20…Nd3+ –+** with an extra exchange.

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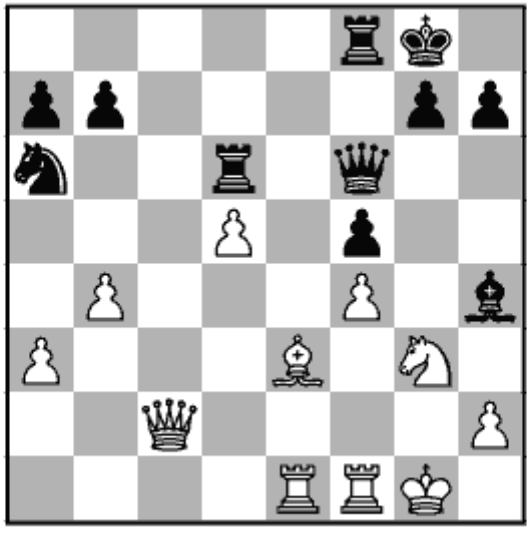

Solution 434: White to play

Larmet – Laoussing

Mumbai 2018/19

The fact that the black rooks are on the same diagonal hopefully caught your eye. After **25 b5! Nb8 26 Bc5 Nd7** (26…Rc8?! 27 Bxd6 Rxc2 28 Re8+ Kf7 29 Rf8+ +– and Black loses a knight) **27 Bxd6 Qxd6 +/–** White has an extra exchange and good chances to win.

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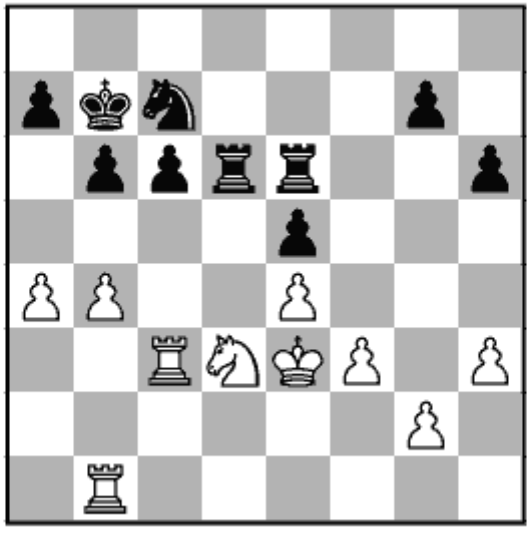


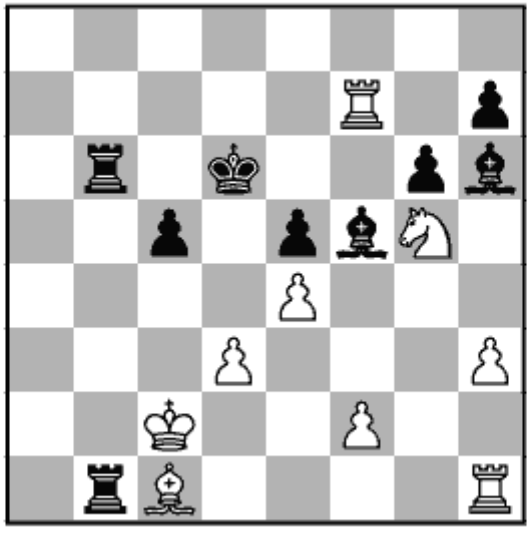
Solution 435: White to play

K.Trisha – Prraneeth

Mumbai 2018/19

White's next two moves both give check *and* attack a black rook: **36 Nc5+! bxc5** (36…Kc8 37 Nxe6 +–) **37 bxc5+ Ka6 38 cxd6 +–** with an easy win.

back



Solution 436: White to play

Rebut – Wahba (based on)

Mumbai 2018/19

White needs to address Black's threat of …Bxg5, and this will dissolve after White exchanges rooks: **31 Rf6+** (31 exf5? Bxg5 is unclear, while 31 Rg1?! R6b2+ 32 Bxb2 Rxg1 gives Black chances to resist) **31…Kc7 32 Rxb6 Rxb6 33 exf5** +–.

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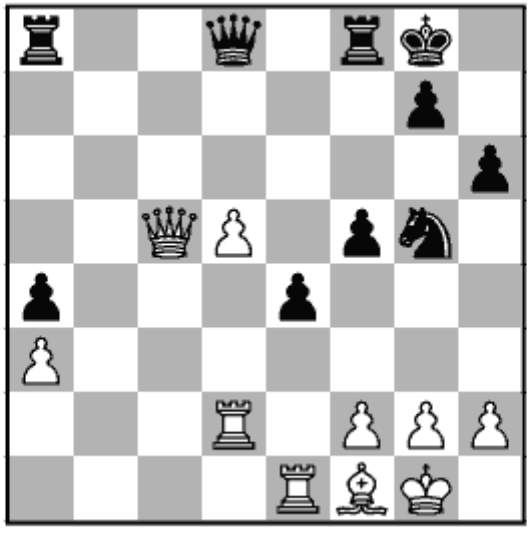

Solution 437: Black to play

B.Thipsay – Sammed Jaykumar (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

Two checks are all it takes for Black to win: **28…Nf3+! 29 gxf3 Qg5+ 30 Kh1 Qxd2** with a decisive advantage.

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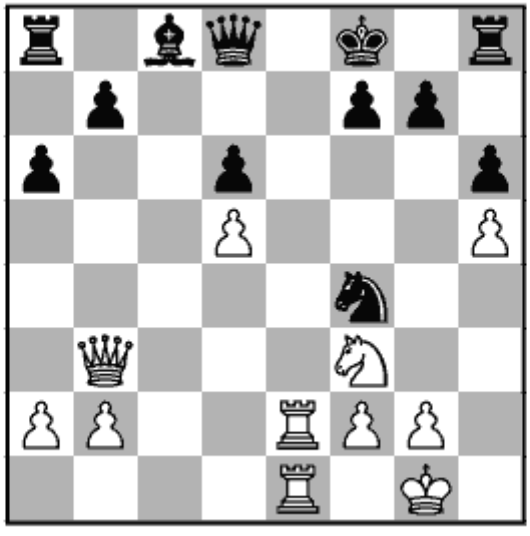


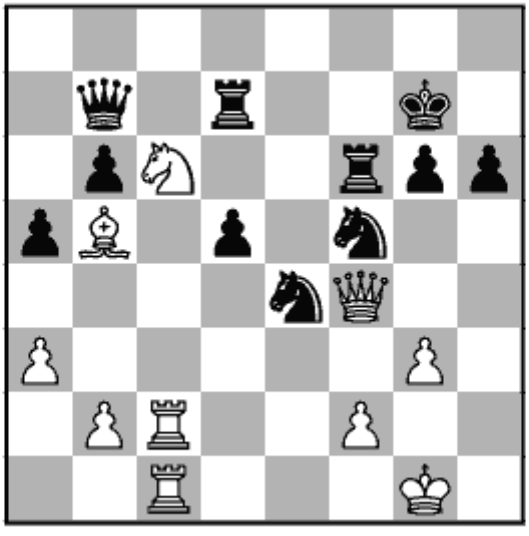
Solution 438: White to play

Banerjee – Lama (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White wins by decoying the black king to e8, setting up a queen fork: **21 Re8+!** (not 21 Re4? Nxh5 –+) **21…Qxe8 22 Rxe8+ Kxe8 23 Qa4+ Ke7 24 Qxf4** and Black's exposed king in the centre dooms him: **24…Bd7 25 Qe3+ Kf8 26 Nd2 +–**.

back



Solution 439: White to play

Samant – R.Prajesh

Mumbai 2018/19

39 Nd8!

There's no time to take the a5-pawn because of Black's ideas with …Nd4: after 39 Nxa5? bxa5 40 Bxd7 Nd4 41 Bc8 Qf7! Black is fine.

39…Rxd8

39…Qa7 is met by 40 Rc7 +– or 40 Bxd7 +–.

40 Rc7+ Rf7 41 Rxb7 Rxb7 42 Rc7+ 1-0

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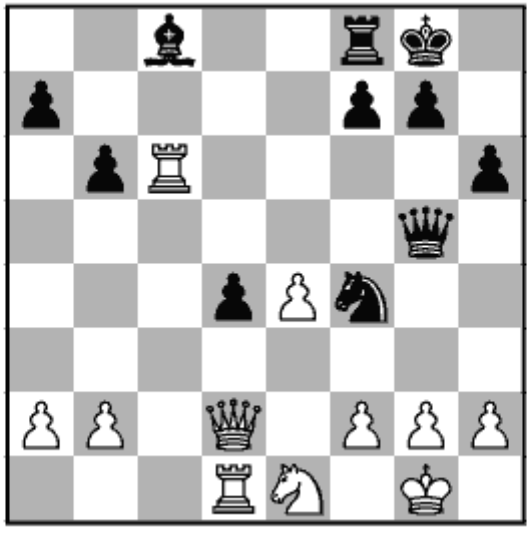

Solution 440: Black to play

K.Trisha – K.Varga (based on)

Mumbai 2018/19

Black creates a sudden double threat of mate and against the loose c6-rook: **24…Nh3+! 25 Kh1 Qb5** (Black wins the rook and the game) **26 Nf3 Qxc6 –+**.

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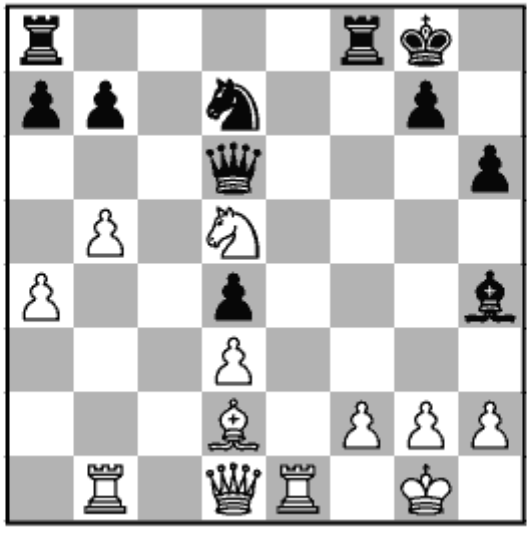


Solution 441: White to play

M.Hasan – Vatsal (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

White needs to find the right moment to play g3.

22 Nf4!

The immediate 22 g3? fails due to 22…Qxd5 23 gxh4 Ne5 –+.

22…Rxf4

22…Nc5!? 23 g3 (23 Qg4!?) 23…Bg5 gives Black chances to resist.

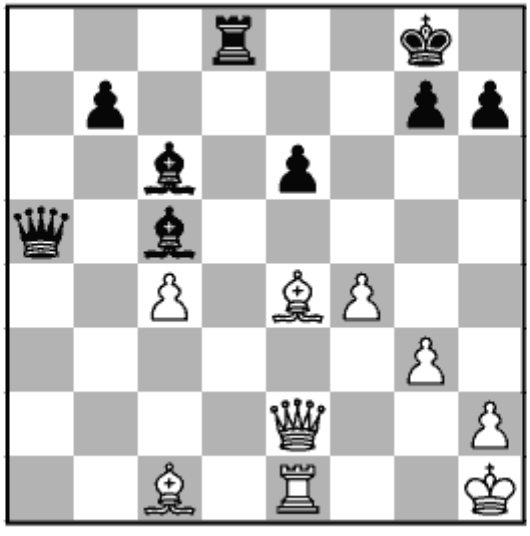
23 Bxf4 Qxf4 24 g3 Qf5

24…Qg5? loses to 25 Re4 +–.

25 gxh4 Ne5 26 Rxe5 +/–

with an extra pawn and chances to win.

back



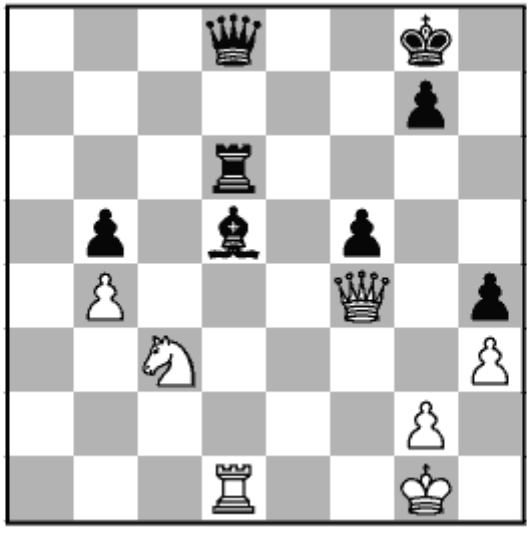
Solution 442: Black to play

Ruane – A.Taylor (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

The only way to win is to exploit the vulnerability of the white king: **27…Qxe1+! 28 Qxe1 Rd1** (White will lose his queen or be mated) **29 Qxd1** (29 Bxc6 Rxe1+ 30 Kg2 bxc6 –+) **29… Bxe4+ 30 Qf3 Bxf3#**.

back



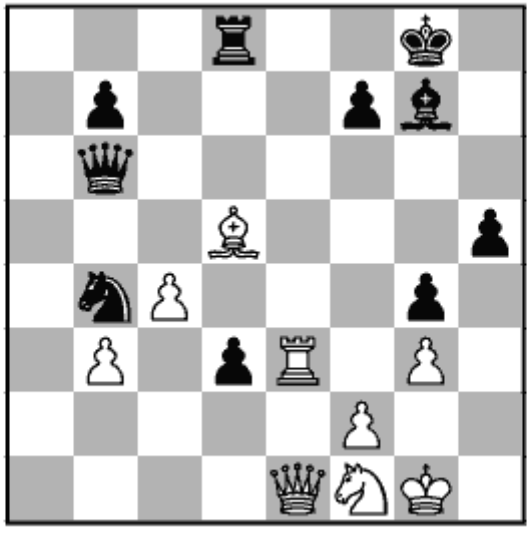
Solution 443: Black to play

Shyam – Kathmale

Mumbai 2018/19

To break the pin, Black must first of all remove his rook from d6: **49…Rd7!** (49…Qb6+? 50 Kh2 Qc6 51 Qe5 +–; 49…Qd7? 50 Qe5 +–) **50 Qxf5 Qb6+** (50…Bc6!? =) **51 Kh1** (51 Qf2 Qxf2+ = was played in the game) **51…Be6** with an equal position.

back



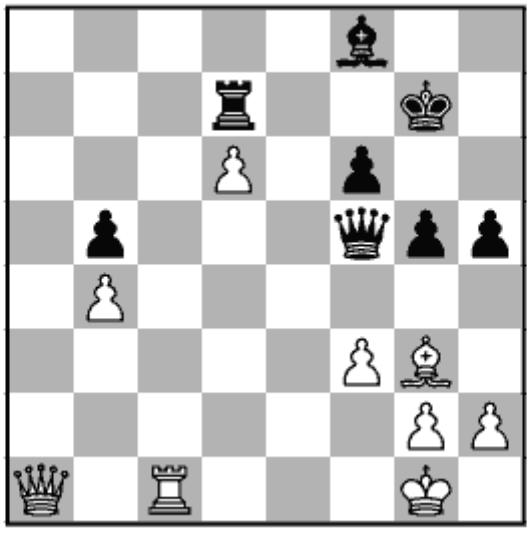
Solution 444: White to play

Puranik – Srihari

Mumbai 2018/19

37 Re8+ Bf8 (or 37…Kh7 38 Be4+ +–, while 37…Rxe8 38 Qxe8+ Kh7 39 Be4+ Kh6 can be met by 40 Qg8 +– or 40 Ne3 +–) and at first glance it seems that Black's defences are adequate, but **38 Qe7!** gives White a mating attack: **38…Nxd5 39 Qxf8+ Kh7 40 Rxd8 1-0**.

back



Solution 445: White to play

K.Wang – Krechetov

Burlingame 2019

White needs to gain a tempo to deny Black time to play 53… h4.

53 Rc5!

Not 53 Rc7? h4 =.

53…Qg6

53…Qd3 54 Rxg5+ (54 Rc7?, as played in the game, allows 54…Rf7 =) 54…Kf7 55 Qa2+ +–.

54 Rc7 Qf5

54…Qe8 55 Qa7 +–.

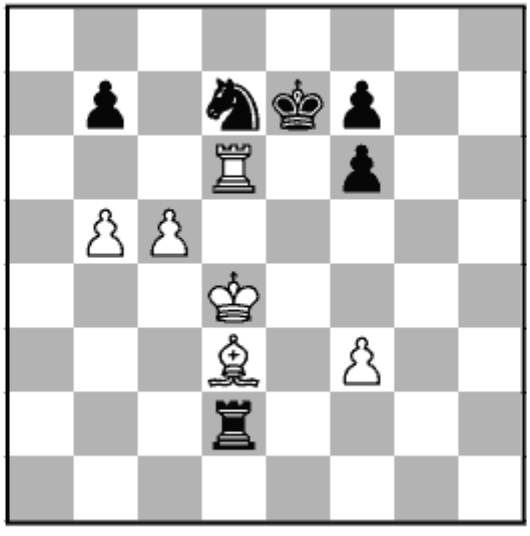
55 Qe1

55 h4!? gxh4 56 Bxh4 Bxd6 57 Qxf6+ +–.

55…h4 56 Qe4 +–

with an easy win.

back



Solution 446: Black to play

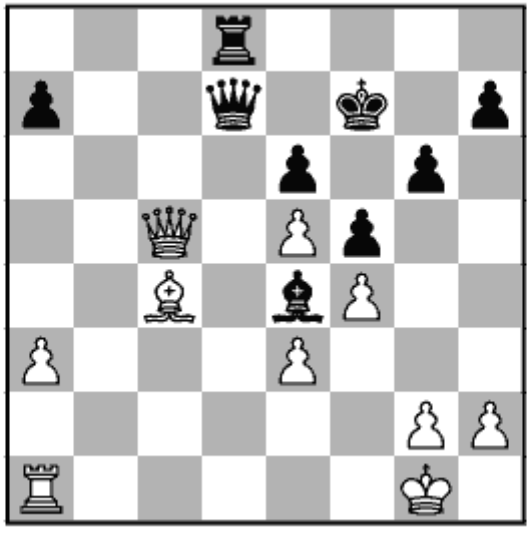
Training position

Black wins because he can lure the white king into a deadly check: **1…Rxd3+!** (not 1…b6? 2 Rxb6 Nxb6 3 cxb6 =) **2 Kxd3 Nxc5+ 3 Kc4 Kxd6 –+**.

back

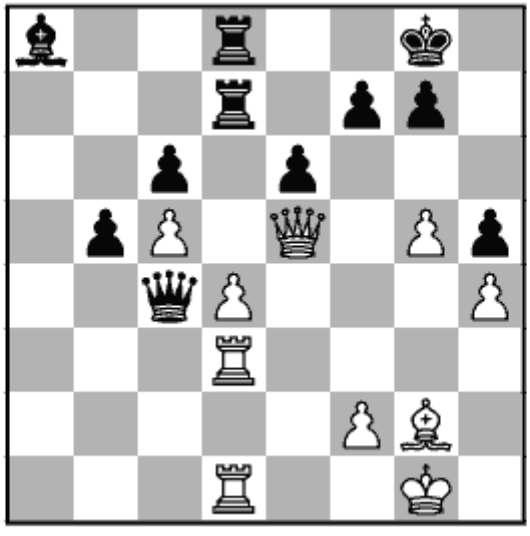
9: Tricky Tasks

Here we have 45 positions, all of level 3. However, you may find this substantially tougher than the equivalent chapter in Part 1 of the book, as you will have to identify the key aspects of each position on your own. This includes whether you should be playing for a win or fighting for a draw.



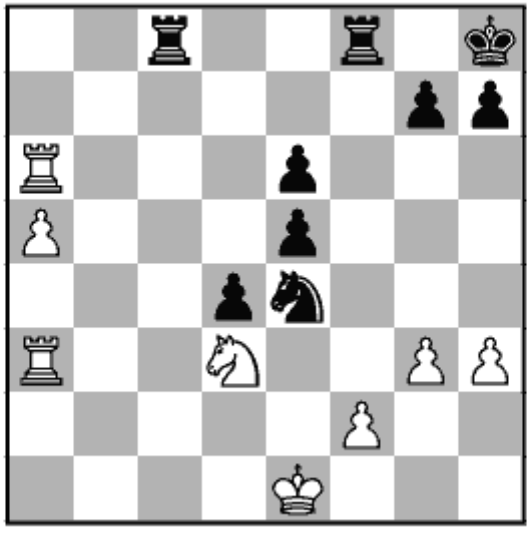
Puzzle 447: Black to play

answer



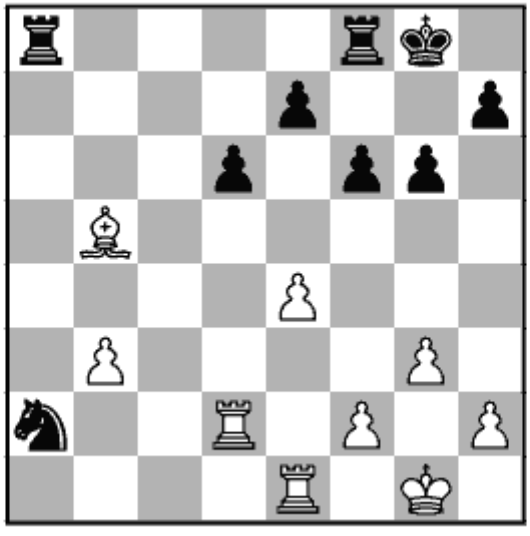
Puzzle 448: White to play

answer



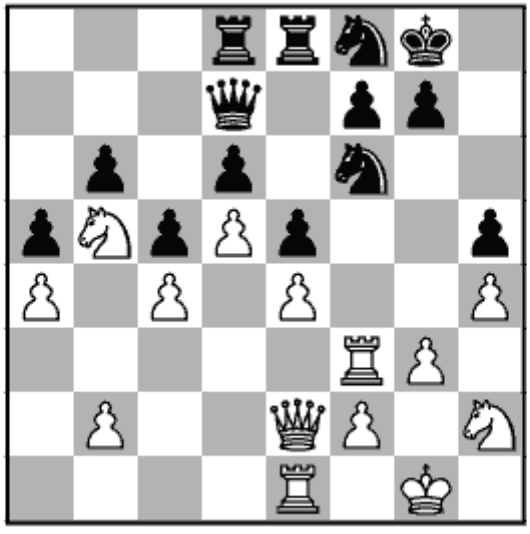
Puzzle 449: White to play

answer



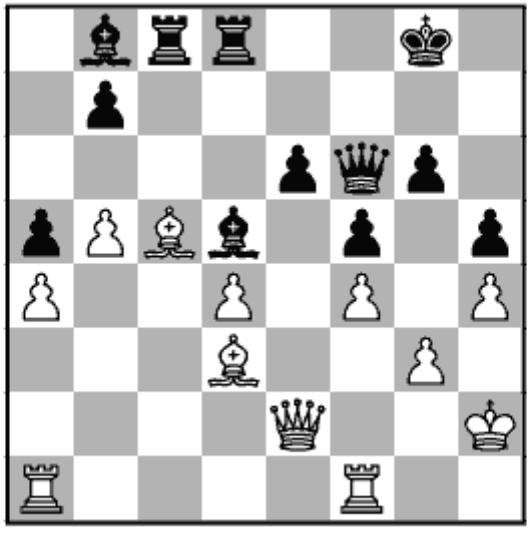
Puzzle 450: White to play

answer



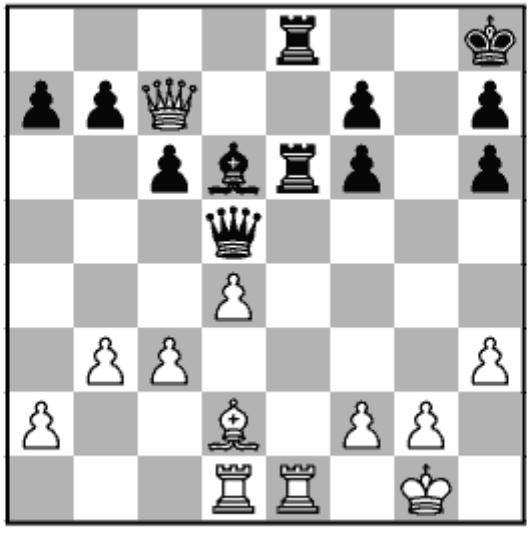
Puzzle 451: White to play

answer



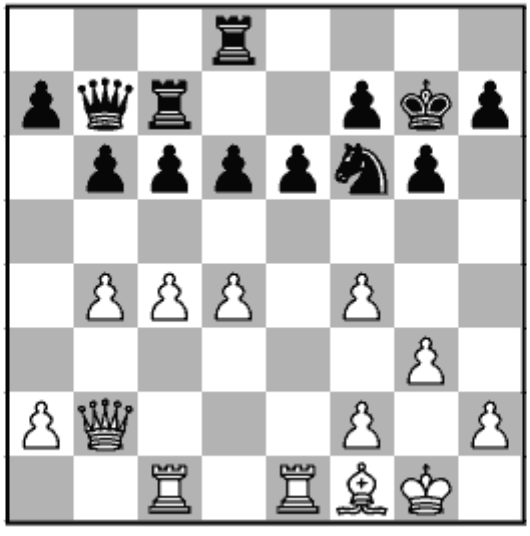
Puzzle 452: Black to play

answer



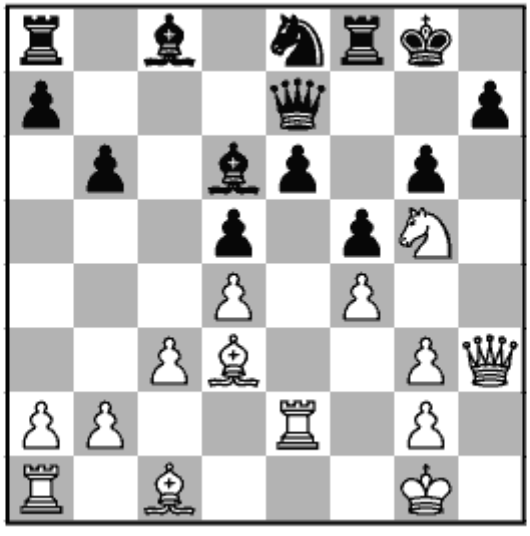
Puzzle 453: White to play

answer



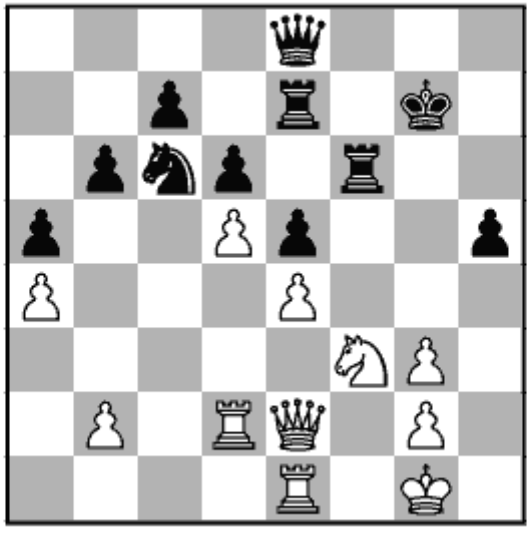
Puzzle 454: White to play

answer



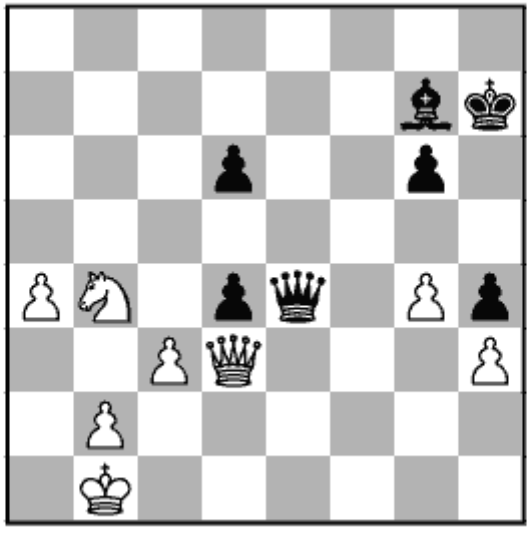
Puzzle 455: White to play

answer



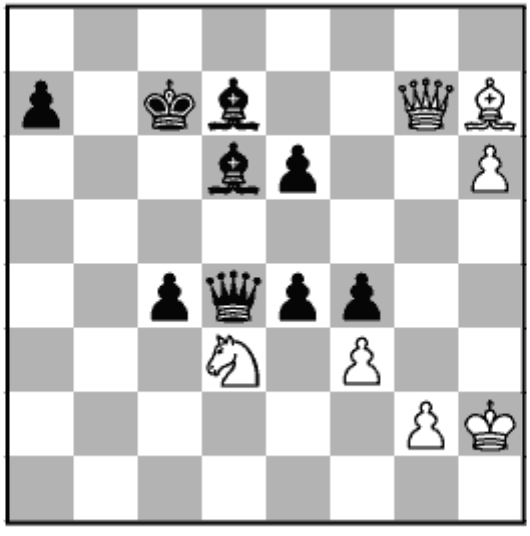
Puzzle 456: Black to play

answer



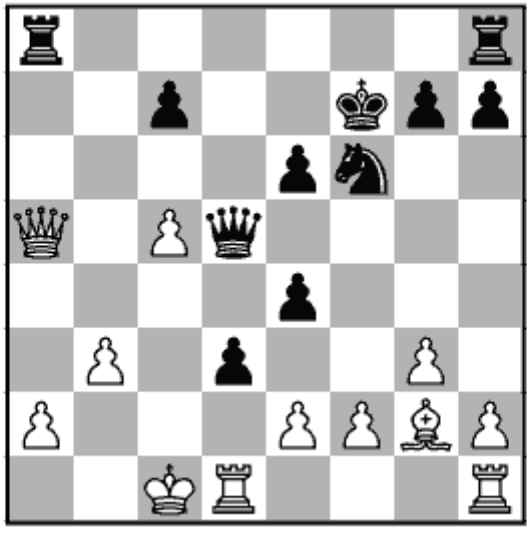
Puzzle 457: Black to play

answer



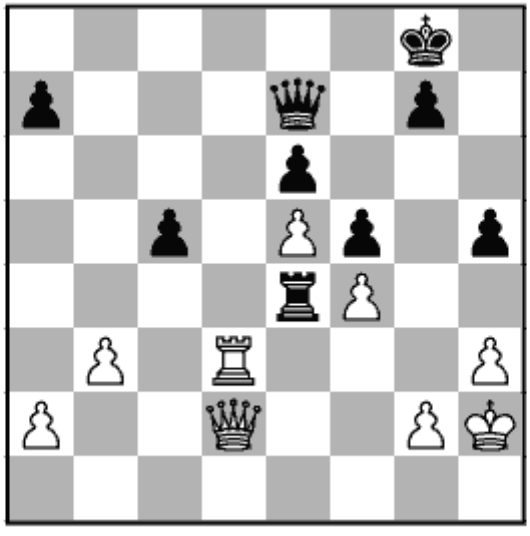
Puzzle 458: Black to play

answer



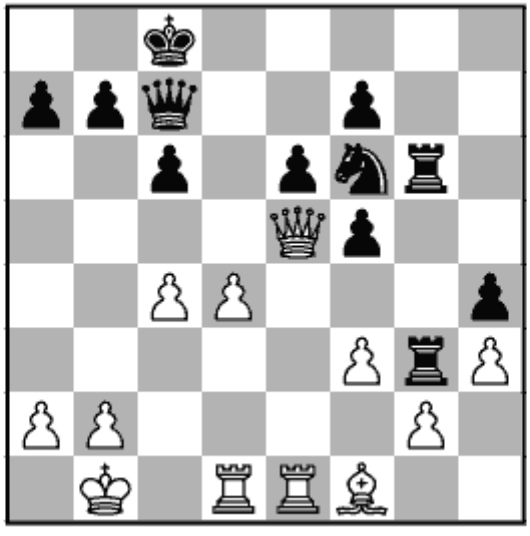
Puzzle 459: White to play

answer



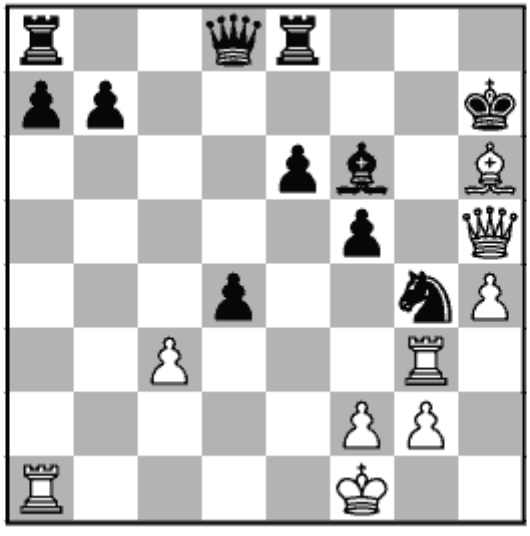
Puzzle 460: Black to play

answer



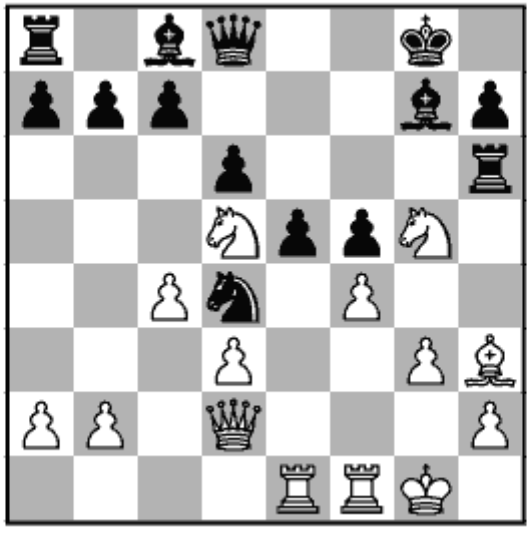
Puzzle 461: White to play

answer



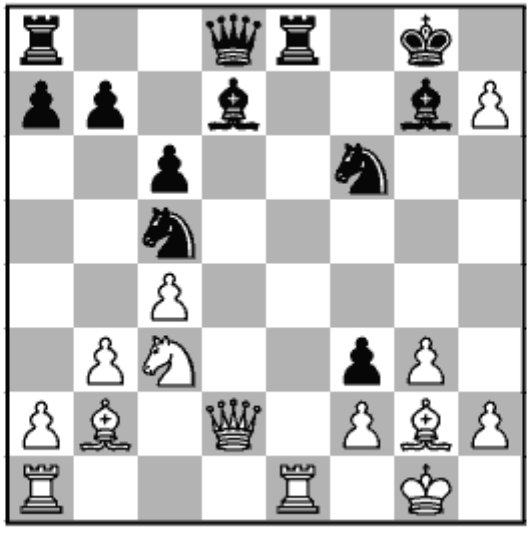
Puzzle 462: Black to play

answer



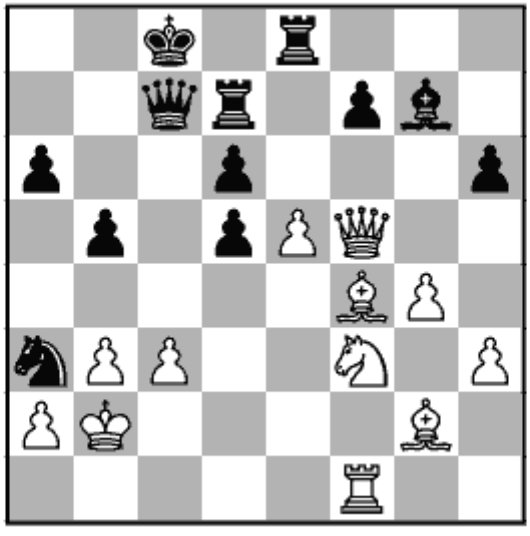
Puzzle 463: White to play

answer



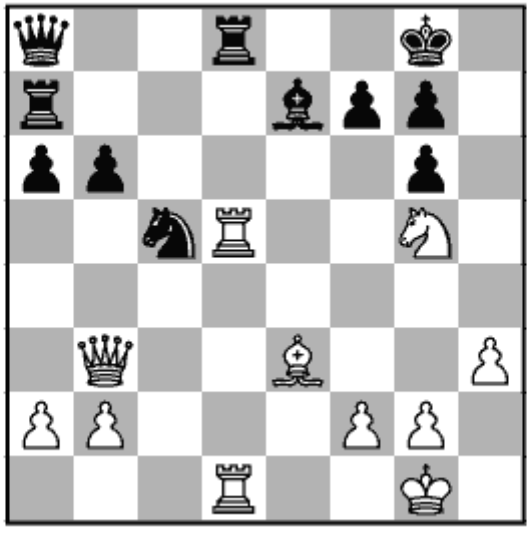
Puzzle 464: Black to play

answer



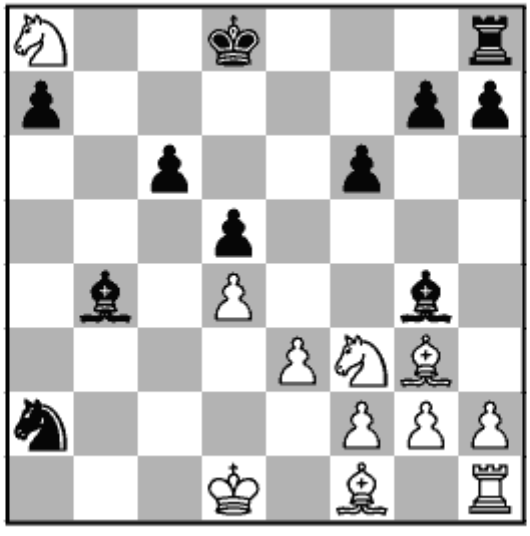
Puzzle 465: White to play

answer



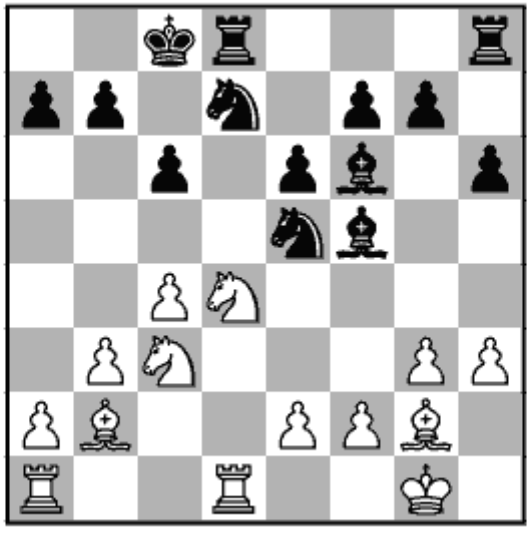
Puzzle 466: White to play

answer



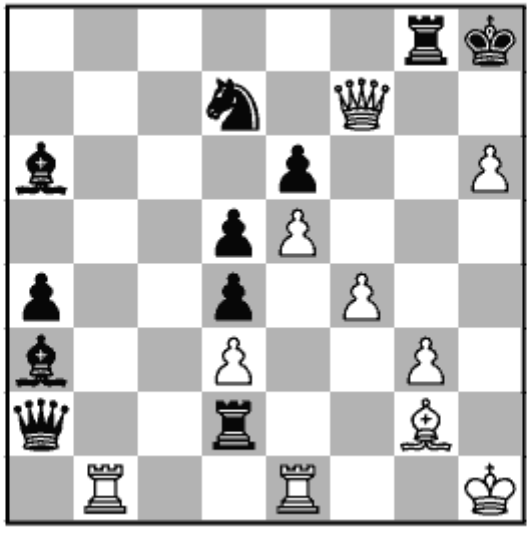
Puzzle 467: Black to play

answer



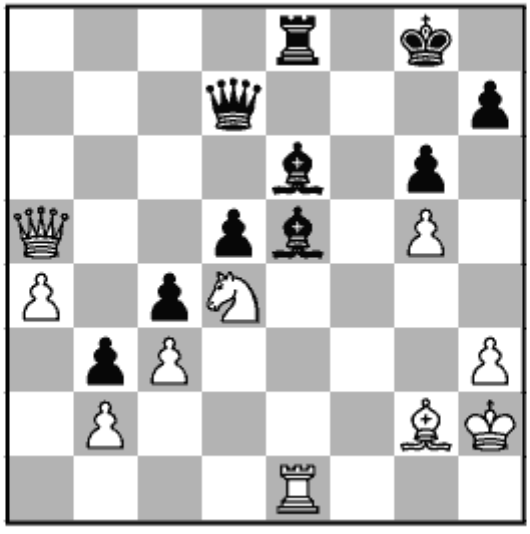
Puzzle 468: Black to play

answer



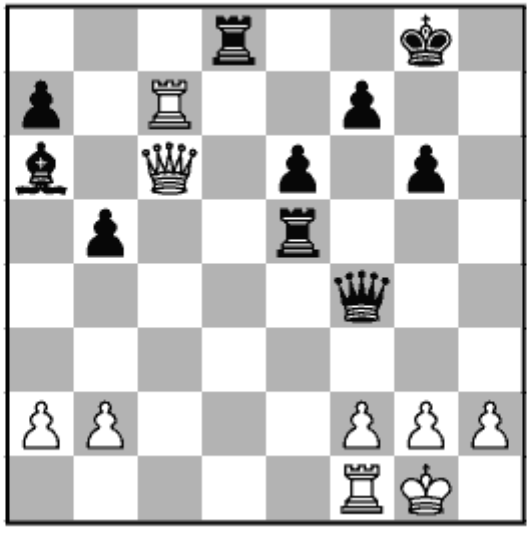
Puzzle 469: White to play

answer



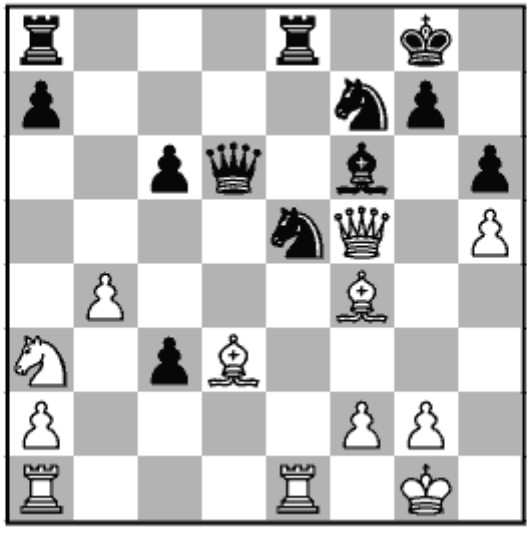
Puzzle 470: White to play

answer



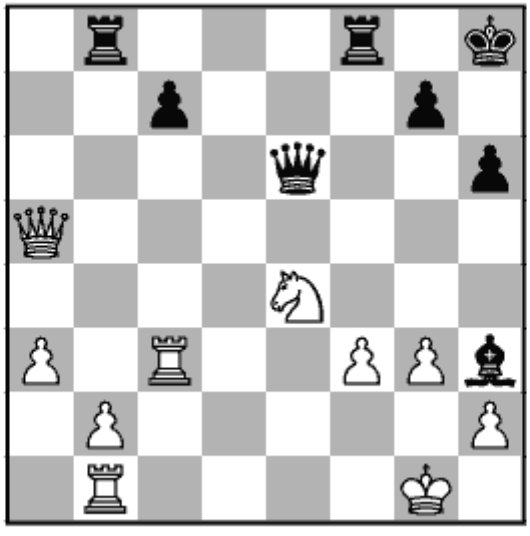
Puzzle 471: White to play

answer



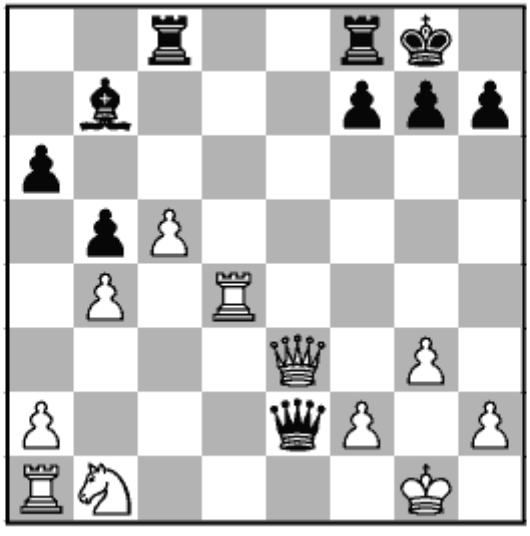
Puzzle 472: White to play

answer



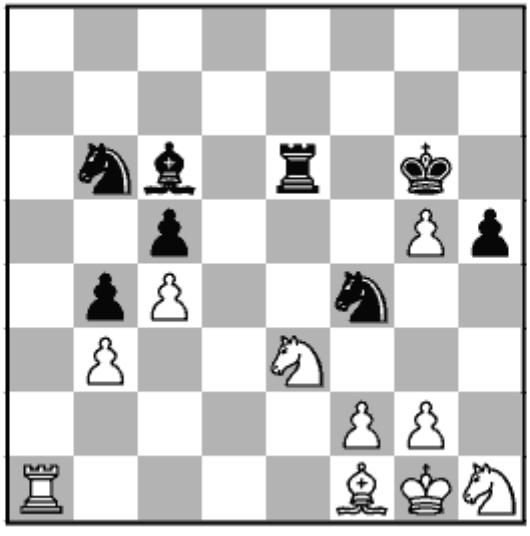
Puzzle 473: Black to play

answer



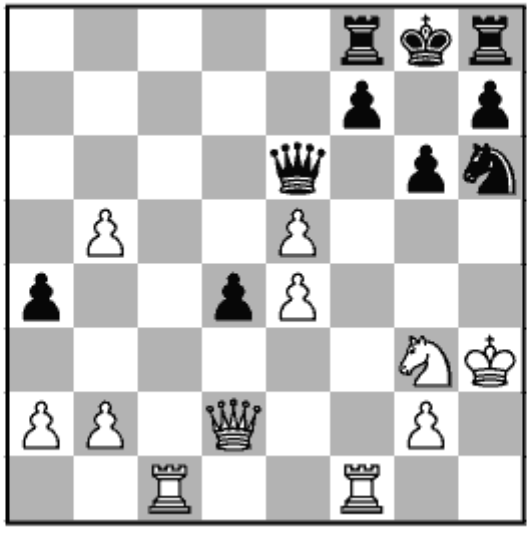
Puzzle 474: Black to play

answer



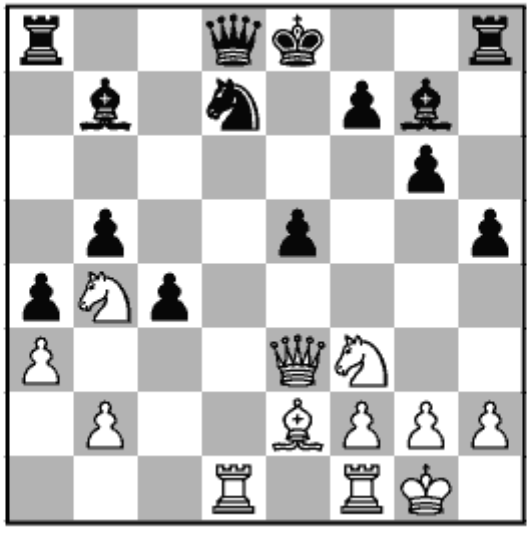
Puzzle 475: Black to play

answer



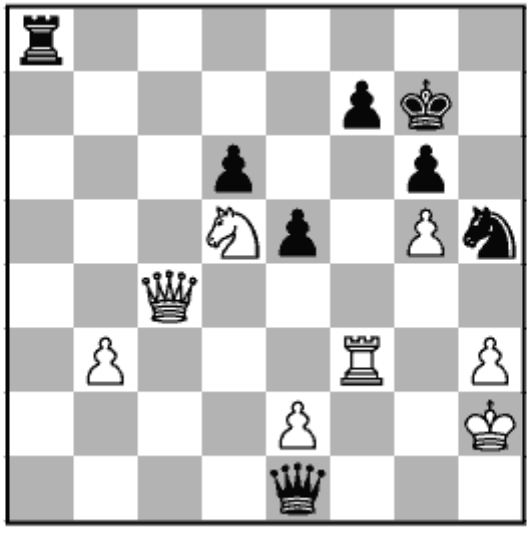
Puzzle 476: White to play

answer



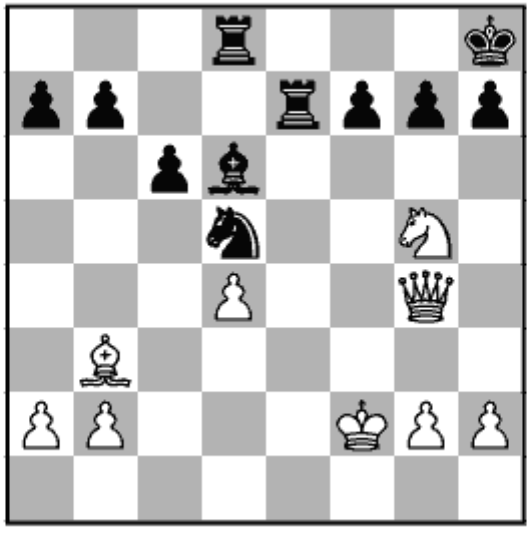
Puzzle 477: White to play

answer



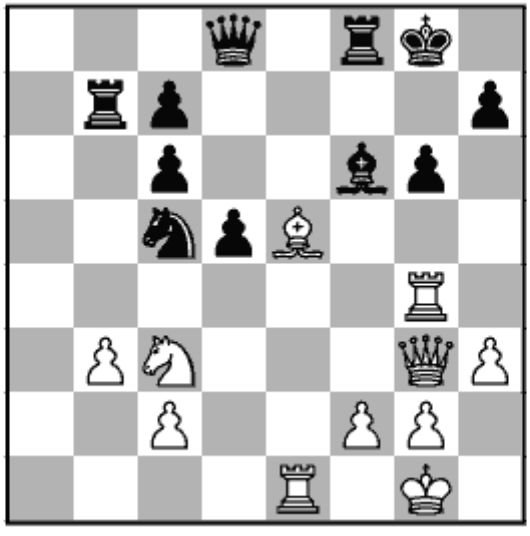
Puzzle 478: Black to play

answer



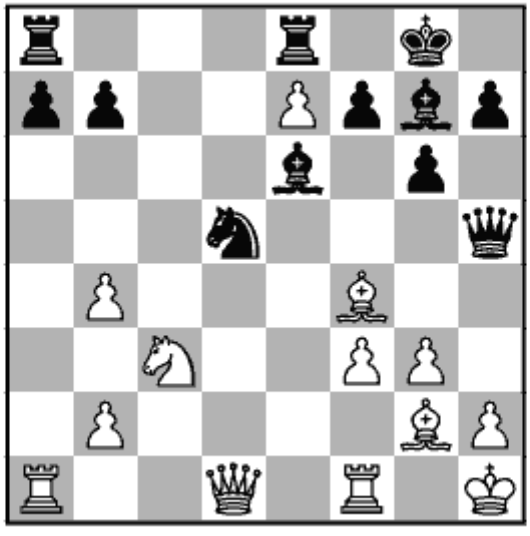
Puzzle 479: White to play

answer



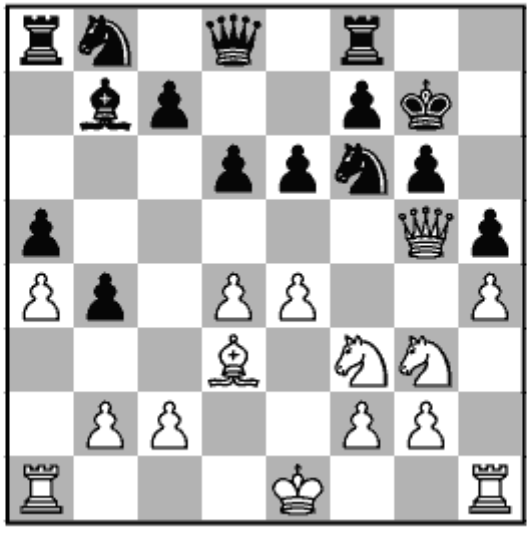
Puzzle 480: White to play

answer



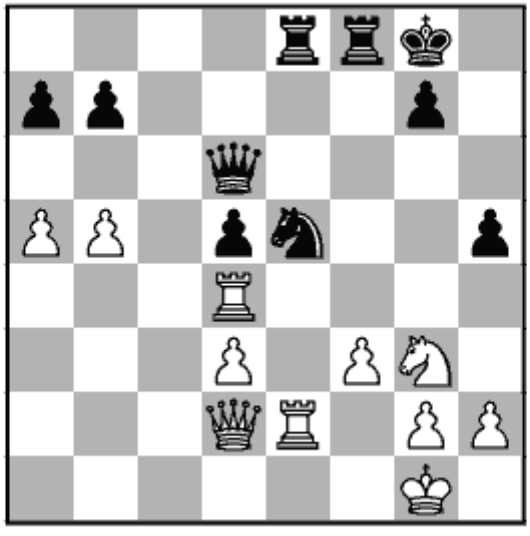
Puzzle 481: White to play

answer



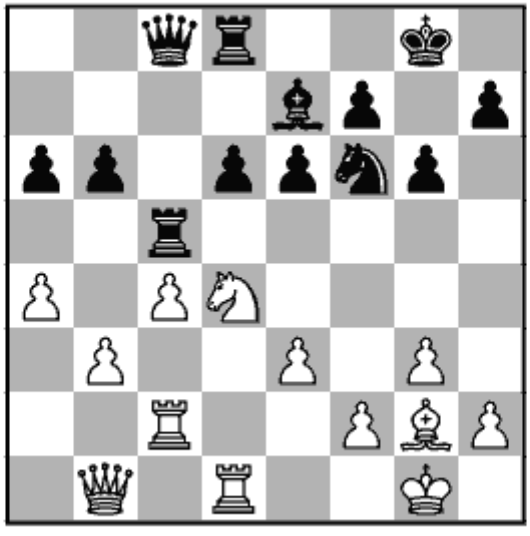
Puzzle 482: Black to play

answer



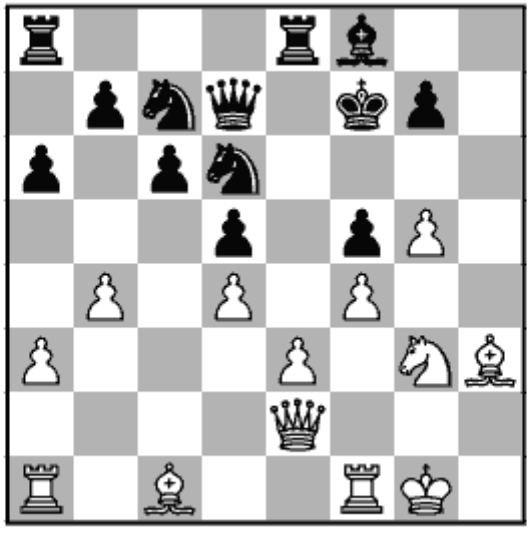
Puzzle 483: Black to play

answer



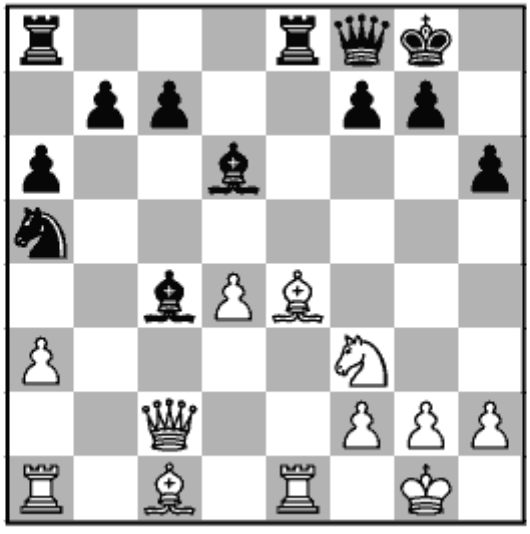
Puzzle 484: White to play

answer



Puzzle 485: White to play

answer

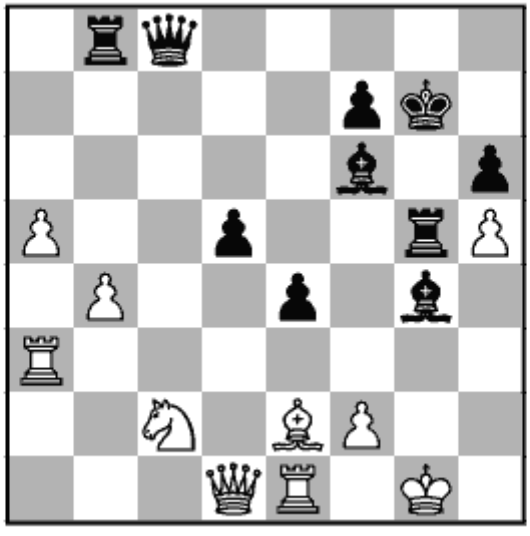


Puzzle 486: White to play

answer

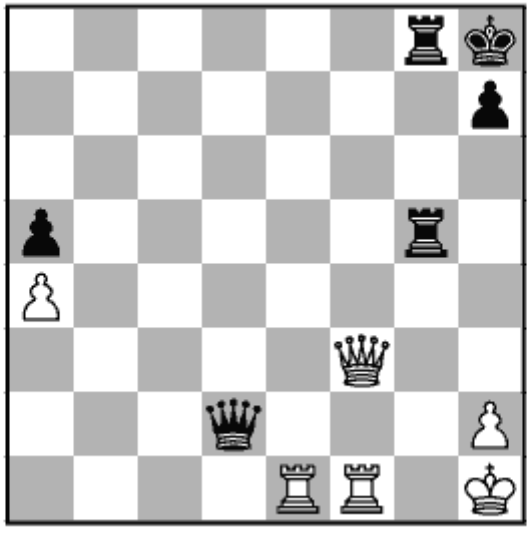
Puzzle 487: White to play

answer



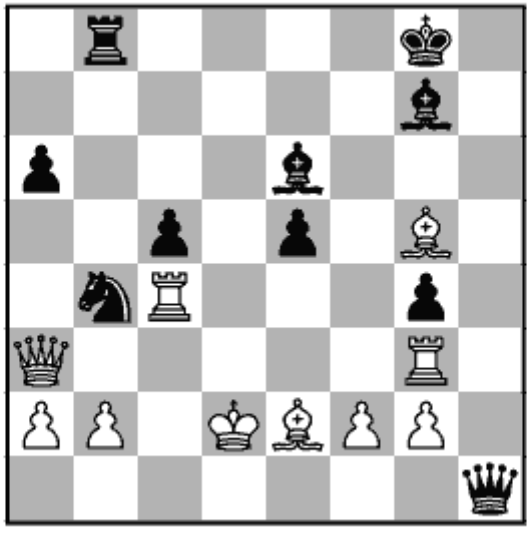
Puzzle 488: White to play

answer



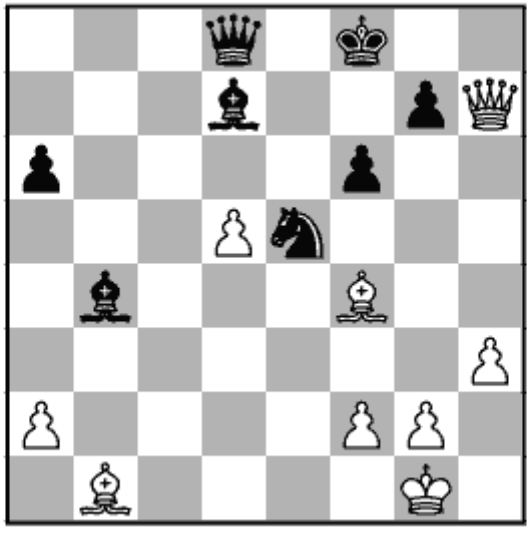
Puzzle 489: Black to play

answer



Puzzle 490: Black to play

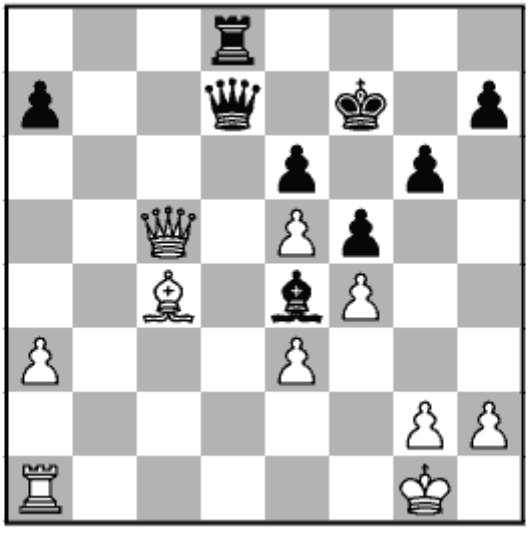
answer



Puzzle 491: White to play

answer

Solutions for Chapter 9



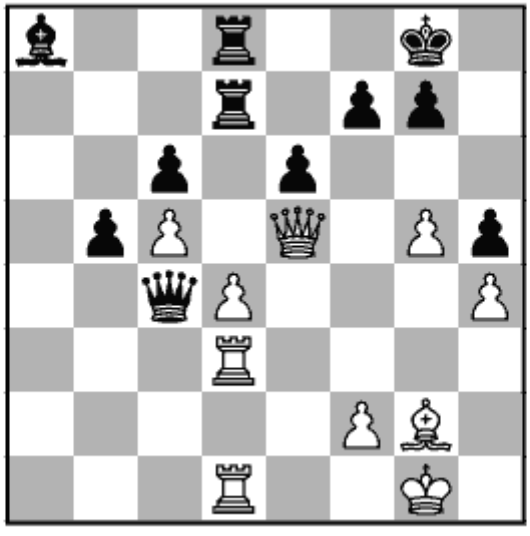
Solution 447: Black to play

Li Kam – Li Yihao

Tianjin 2018/19

Before dropping the queen into d2, Black should first lay the groundwork by driving the white queen away from the e3-pawn: **30…Rc8!** (not 30…Qd2? 31 Bf1 =) **31 Qb4 a5! 32 Qb3** (32 Qb5 Qd2 –+) **32…Qd2** and White's position is falling apart. For example: **33 Ra2** (or 33 Bf1 Rc2 –+, as played in the game) **33…Qc1+ 34 Bf1 Bd5 –+**.

back



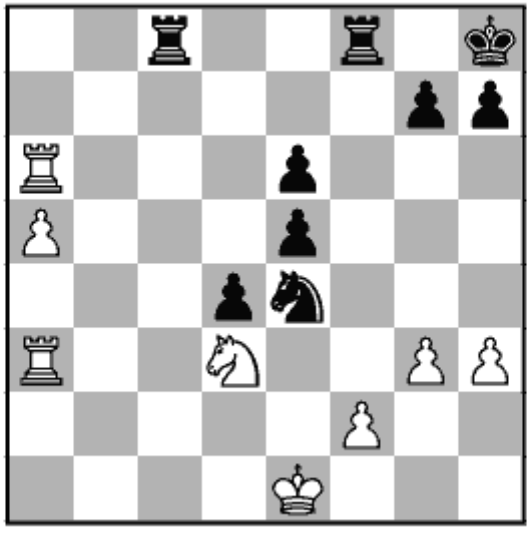
Solution 448: White to play

Zhao Yuanhe – Zhang Lanlin (based on)

Tianjin 2018/19

With Black's pieces bunched up on the queenside, it is natural for White to attack on the kingside: **30 g6!** (30 Be4? gives Black time to shore up his defences with 30…g6 =) **30…fxg6 31 Be4 +–** and Black lacks defensive resources. Here are some sample lines: **31…Rf8** (31…b4 32 Qg5 Rxd4 33 Qxg6 Rxd3 34 Rxd3 +–) **32 Rg3!?** (slightly weaker is 32 Bxg6 Qd5 33 Qg3) **32…Qa2 33 Rf1 Qc4** (33…Rf6 34 Rxg6 +–) **34 Qg5!?** (not the only way to win, but the most beautiful) **34…Rf6 35 Bxg6 Qd5** (35…Qxd4 36 Qxh5 +–) **36 Qxf6 gxf6 37 Be4+ +–**.

back



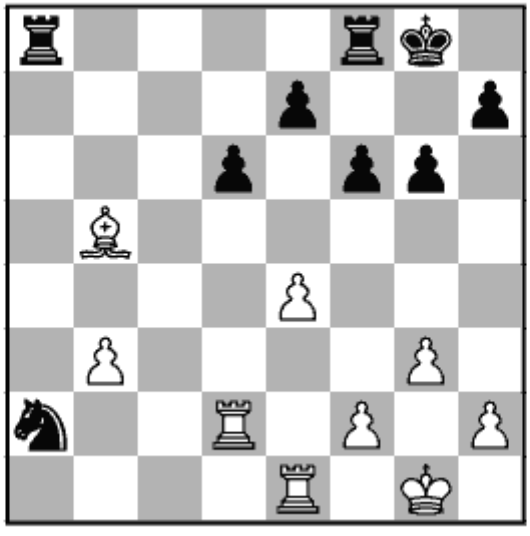
Solution 449: White to play

Banik – J.Wang (variation)

Burlingame 2019

To win the game, White just needs to find a way to advance his a-pawn: **37 Rb6!** (after 37 Rxe6? Ng5! 38 Rd6?! e4 White must fight for a draw) **37…Rc2** (37…Nc5 38 Nxe5 +–; 37…Rc3 38 Rxc3 dxc3 39 a6 +–) **38 a6 Nxf2 39 Nxf2 Rcxf2 40 a7** +– with a decisive advantage.

back



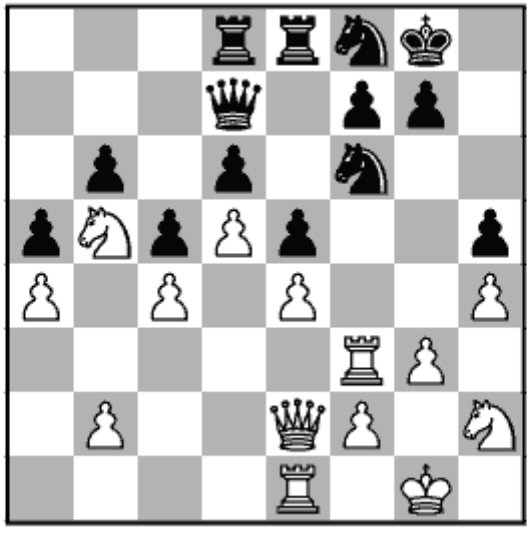
Solution 450: White to play

Kishor – Triton

Mumbai 2018/19

With the rook on a8 defended, playing Ra1 achieves nothing. But if that rook can be driven away, then things will be different… **26 Bc6! Ra6 27 Bb7 Ra7** (the game featured 27… Nb4 28 Bxa6 +–) **28 Bd5+** with an easy win: **28…e6** (28… Kg7 29 Ra1 +–) **29 Bxe6+ Kg7 30 Rxd6 +–** (or 30 Ra1!? +–).

back



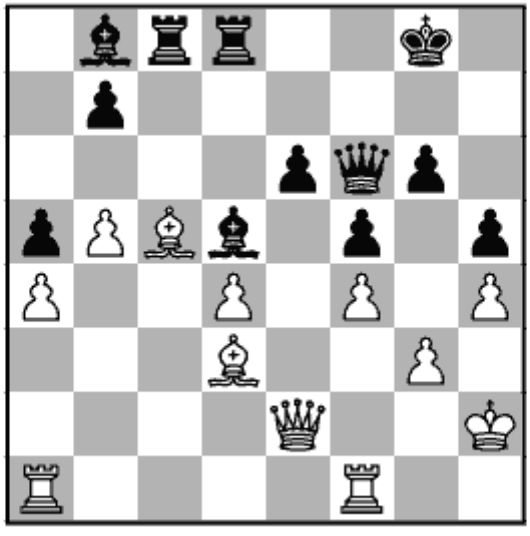
Solution 451: White to play

Ostrovskiy – Nagarajan

Burlingame 2019

After **30 Rxf6! gxf6 31 Qxh5 +–** the black rooks are in no position to defend their king. Following **31…Nh7 32 Ng4 Rf8 33 Re3 f5 34 Nh6+ Kh8 35 Nxf5 +–** Black soon resigned.

back



Solution 452: Black to play

M.Rahman – M.Hasan (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

After a couple of crisp blows, it turns out that the key tactical weakness in White's position is a loose rook on a1!

31…Bxf4!

31…Rxc5? is the wrong move-order since 32 dxc5 Bxf4 33 Kh3 is just unclear.

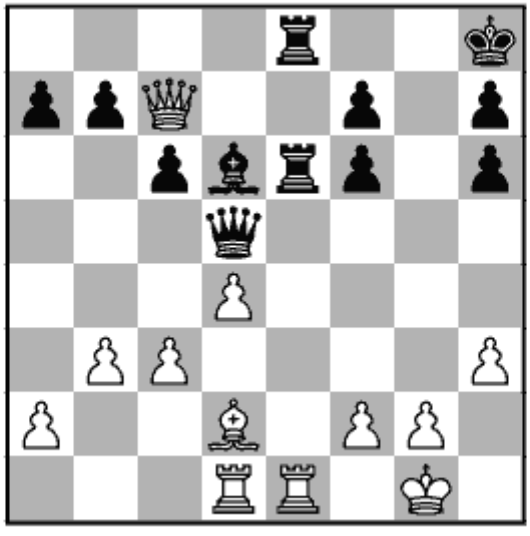
32 Rxf4

32 gxf4? Qxh4+ 33 Kg1 Qg3+ 34 Qg2 Qxg2#.

32…Rxc5 –+

with an extra pawn and a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 453: White to play

Y.Liou – C.Jones

Burlingame 2019

Black is about to start pounding on g2, so White needs to drive the queen from d5.

24 c4!

24 Qxb7? Rg8 25 g4 (25 g3 Bxg3 –+) 25…Qf3 –+.

24…Rxe1+

24…Qxd4 25 Rxe6!? (simpler than 25 Qxf7 Rxe1+ 26 Bxe1! Re2!? 27 Rc1!, with unclear play) 25…fxe6 26 Qf7 (26 Qxb7!?) 26…Rg8 27 Be1!? Qxd1 28 Qxf6+ with perpetual check.

25 Bxe1

Retaining the rooks is more accurate than 25 Rxe1?! Rxe1+ 26 Bxe1 Bxc7 27 cxd5, when a draw was agreed in the game, even though Black is somewhat better in this bishop ending.

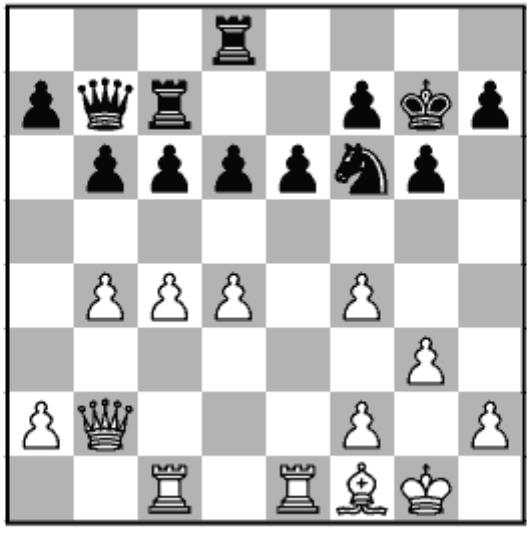
25…Bxc7

A key tactical point in White's favour is 25…Qxd4?! 26 Qxd6 (26 Qxf7 is also OK) 26…Rxe1+ 27 Kh2, when Black must exchange queens with equality since 27…Rxd1?? allows 28 Qf8#.

26 cxd5 cxd5 27 Bb4

White clearly has no problems in this ending, with his 'good' bishop and active rook coming to the c-file.

back



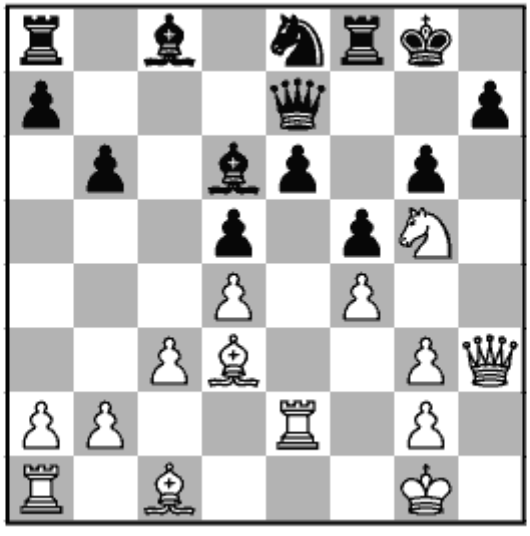
Solution 454: White to play

Senthil – Anuj

Mumbai 2018/19

Black's pieces are poorly placed to break a pin on the f6-knight, so White needs to open the long a1-h8 diagonal without delay: **21 d5! Qc8!?** (taking on d5 loses immediately: 21…cxd5?! 22 g4 e5 23 fxe5 dxe5 24 Qxe5 Re8 25 Qd4 +–, while the game featured 21…exd5?! 22 g4 d4 23 Qxd4 +–) **22 g4** (22 Bh3!? +/–) **22…e5 23 fxe5 dxe5** (23…Qxg4+ 24 Bg2 dxe5 25 Qxe5 +–) and now several moves lead to a big advantage, the simplest being **24 Qxe5 Re8 25 Qf4 Rxe1 26 Rxe1 cxd5 27 g5** and White is close to victory.

back



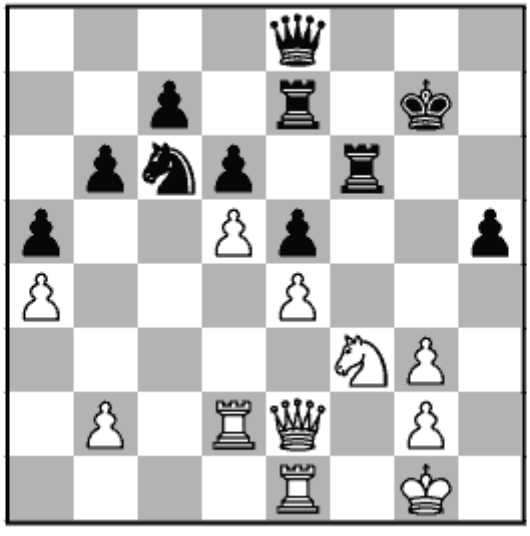
Solution 455: White to play

Zhang Lanlin – D.Stones

Tianjin 2018/19

Black would be more than OK if he could get his knight to e4, so White must find a way to prevent this. **20 g4!** (rather than 20 c4? Qg7 =+ {as played in the game} or 20 Bd2? Nf6 21 Rae1 Ne4 =+) **20…fxg4** (even worse is 20…Nf6? 21 gxf5 gxf5 22 Bxf5 +–, while 20…Qc7 is well met by 21 Qh4!? {also good is 21 Nxe6 Bxe6 22 Rxe6 fxg4 23 Qxg4 +/–} 21…fxg4 22 Bd2 +/–, when 22…Bxf4?! loses to 23 Bxf4 Rxf4 24 g3! Rf8 {24…Rf6 25 Bb5 Nd6 and everything is set up for 26 Nxh7!} 25 Rh2, crashing through on the h-file) **21 Qxg4 Nf6 22 Qh4** +/– with a large advantage. White plans Bd2 and Rae1, and will meet **22…Nh5** with the simple **23 g3**.

back



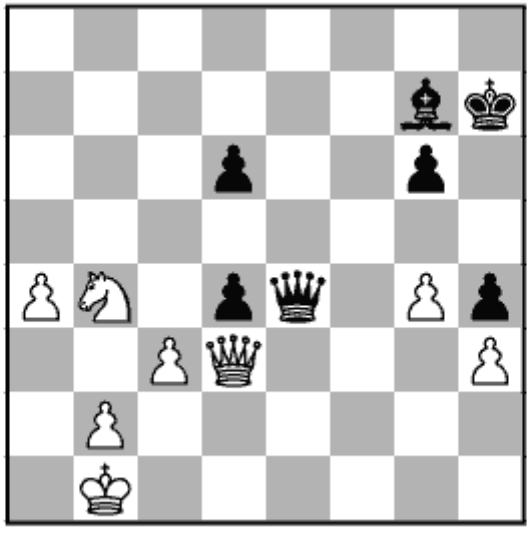
Solution 456: Black to play

Huang Renjie – Jiang Qinyu (based on)

Tianjin 2018/19

Black mustn't let White establish his knight on f5. 32…Nb4? fails for that reason: after 33 Nh4 Kg8 (33…Kf8 34 Nf5 +–) 34 Nf5 Rh7 35 Rf1 +– the f5-knight is too strong, and White should win. Also bad is 32…Nd8? 33 Nh4 Kh8 34 Rf1 Rxf1+ 35 Qxf1 +–. So Black should play **32…Nd4! 33 Nxd4 exd4 34 Rxd4 Ref7** with fairly good compensation for the pawn.

back



Solution 457: Black to play

Gu Tianlu – Li Yihao

Tianjin 2018/19

Black must target the a4-pawn before White can support it with his king.

43…Qe8!

This is better than:

a) 43…Qa8?! 44 cxd4 Qxa4 45 Nc2 +/–.

b) 43…Qe1+? 44 Kc2 dxc3 45 bxc3 (played in the game) 45…Qe8 (45…Qa1 46 Kb3 +–) 46 Kb3 +–.

44 a5

Not 44 cxd4? Qe1+ –+.

44…dxc3 45 bxc3 Qa4 46 Qc4 Qxa5

with a roughly equal position.

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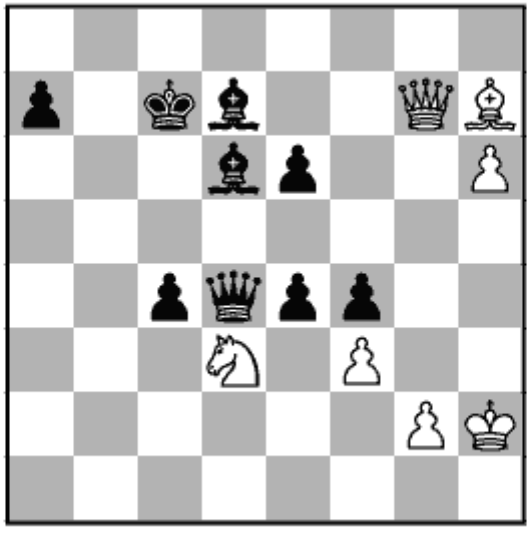


Solution 458: Black to play

Percivaldi – Luukkonen

Stockholm 2018/19

White is looking to promote his h-pawn, but Black wins by creating mate threats.

40…Qd5!

Not: 40…Qxd3? 41 Bxe4 Qe3 42 h7 Bc5 43 Qe5+! +–; 40…e5? 41 Bf5 Bf8 42 Qxf8 (as played in the game) with an unclear position.

41 Bxe4

Other moves also offer no hope: 41 Nf2 e3 42 Ne4 e2 –+; 41 Bg6 exd3 42 h7 Be5 –+.

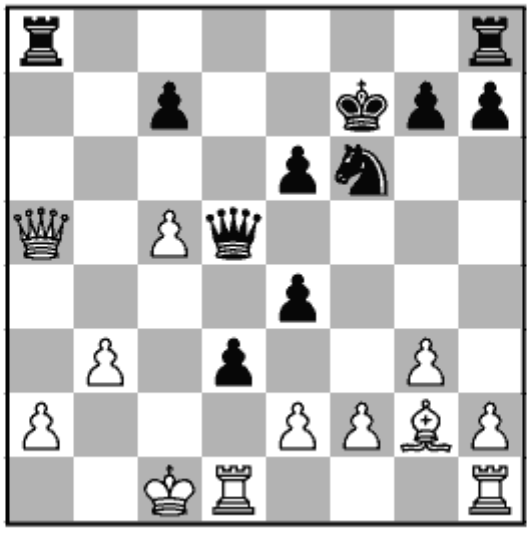
41…Qh5+ 42 Kg1 cxd3 43 Bxd3

43 h7 Bc5+ 44 Kf1 Qh1#.

43…Be5 –+

with an extra bishop and a mating attack.

back



Solution 459: White to play

Chu Ruotong – Dai Changren

Tianjin 2018/19

White generates a sudden counterattack.

28 Qxc7+

After 28 Qd2?, as played in the game, Black wins rather easily with 28…e3 –+.

28…Kg6 29 Rxd3!

Without this move, White would be losing. 29 Kb1? Rxa2! and now 30 Kxa2 Ra8+ –+ or 30 Rxd3 Qa8 –+.

29…Qf5

Or 29…Qg5+ 30 Re3 Rhc8 31 Qd6 Rxa2 (31…Rd8?! 32 h4 +–) 32 b4 +/–, when with the queen on g5, Black can't make much impact on the white king. Then 32…Rca8?! is bad due to 33 Qxe6 +–.

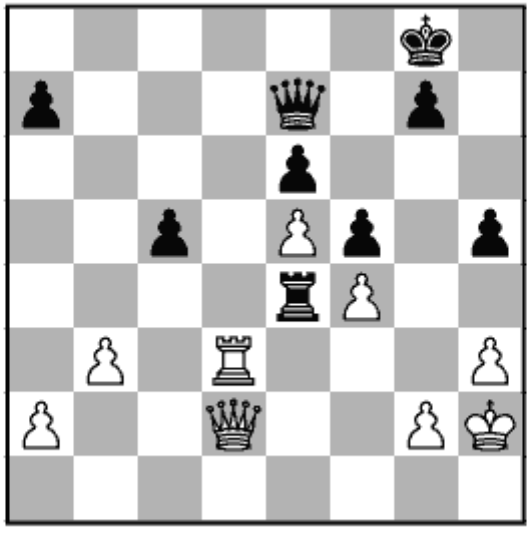
30 Rd2 Qxf2

30…Rhc8?! 31 Qf4 Qxc5+ 32 Kb1 +–.

31 e3 Qxe3 32 Qf4

with a large advantage and excellent winning chances.

back



Solution 460: Black to play

Wang Puxuan – Li Kam

Tianjin 2018/19

Black needs to open some paths to the white king.

38…Qh4!

Not:

a) 38…Kh7?! 39 Rd7 Qe8 (39…Qh4? 40 g3 +–) 40 Rxa7 +/–.

b) 38…c4? (as played in the game) 39 Rd7! Qc5 (39…c3 40 Qd1 c2 41 Rd8+ +–) 40 Rd8+ Kh7 41 Qd1 Kg6 42 Rh8 +– with a mating attack.

39 g3 Qe7

Black is fine thanks to the possible check on e2: **40 Rd7** (40 h4 c4 =) **40…Re2+ 41 Qxe2 Qxd7 =**.

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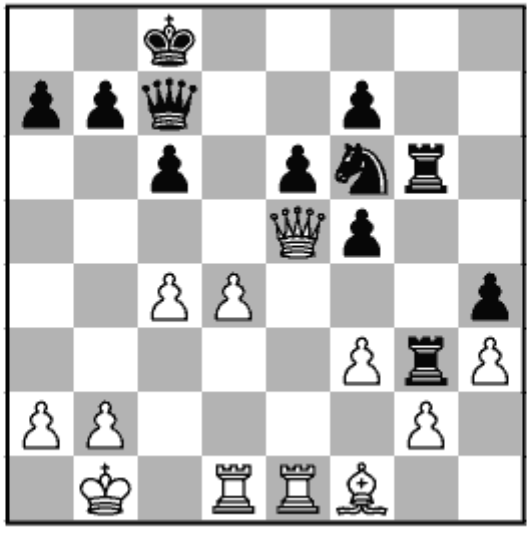


Solution 461: White to play

C.Hunt – D.Stones

Tianjin 2018/19

Black's decision to move both rooks off his back rank should have cost him dear.

28 Qc5!

In the game White mistakenly exchanged queens, which left him substantially worse.

28…b6

Or:

a) 28…Rg8 29 Qxa7 +–.

b) 28…Kb8 29 d5!? (slightly weaker is 29 Qf8+ Qc8 30 Qxf7 Ng8 +/–) 29…cxd5 30 Qf8+ Qc8 31 Qxf7 +–.

29 Qf8+ Kb7 30 d5!

This key breakthrough leads to victory. The less incisive 30 Qh8 f4 31 Qxh4 R3g5 +/– allows Black chances to draw.

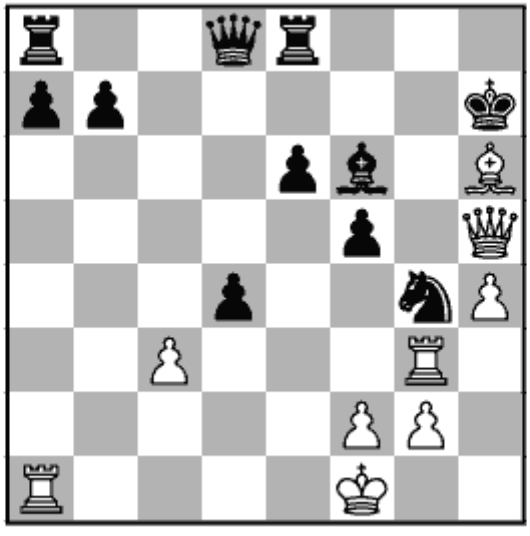
30…Rg8

After 30…cxd5 31 cxd5 Rg8 (31…Nxd5 32 Rxd5 +–) 32 Qa3 +– taking the d5-pawn is fatal, but it is also too dangerous to leave it alive.

31 dxc6+ Kxc6 32 Qh6 R3g6 33 Qxh4 +–

with an extra pawn and a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 462: Black to play

An.Larsen – O.Willson

Hastings 2018/19

Black can repel White's threats by using a somewhat unusual manoeuvre.

25…Rh8!

And with that, White's attack is immediately over. Instead 25…Qd7? 26 Rxg4 fxg4 27 Bg5+ gives White enough compensation for the exchange: 27…Kg7 (27…Kg8 28 Bxf6 += was played in the game) 28 Qh6+ is unclear. The game is also unclear after 25…dxc3? 26 Rxg4 Qd3+ 27 Kg1 fxg4 28 Bg5+.

26 f3 Qe8 –+

Or 26…Bxh4 27 Bg5+ Kg7 –+.

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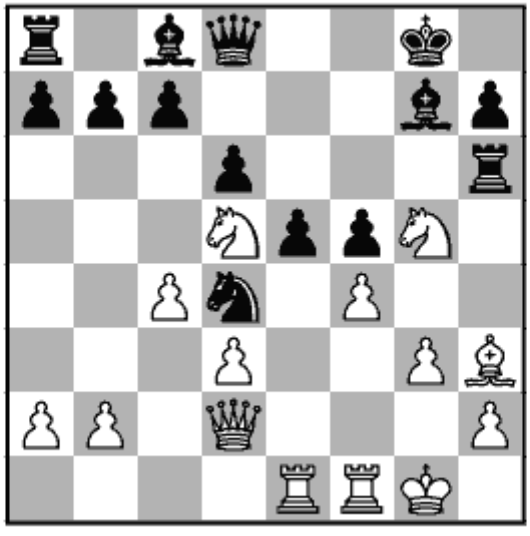


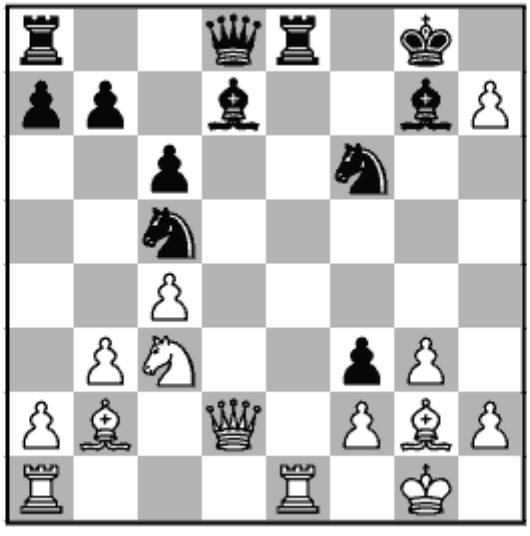
Solution 463: White to play

Spanton – Rahulan (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

White pinpoints the surprising vulnerability of the c7-pawn: **22 Qa5! b6?!** (this obvious way to parry the attack fails tactically; while not instantly losing, 22…Bd7 23 Qxc7 +/– is of course miserable for Black) **23 Ne7+!** (White must be accurate, since the more obvious version of the same idea, 23 Nxb6?, fails due to 23…c6! –/+) **23…Kf8 24 Qd5 Qxe7 25 Qxa8** with a decisive advantage for White.

back



Solution 464: Black to play

J.Trevelyan – V.Stefansson

Hastings 2018/19

Often three pawns can be worth as much as a minor piece. But that can only be the case for White here if he preserves his light-squared bishop, so to find the right move, Black must take that into account.

16…Nxh7!

After 16…Kh8? 17 Bxf3 Bf5 (as played in the game) White can play 18 Qg5!? with an unclear position, while in the case of 16…Kxh7?! 17 Qc2+! Kg8 18 Bxf3 =+ Black's advantage is far smaller than it could have been.

17 Bxf3 Ng5

The knight check on h3 will cause White's position to collapse: **18 Bg2 Nh3+ 19 Bxh3** (19 Kh1 Be6 –+; 19 Kf1 Bf5 –+) **19…Bxh3** with a decisive advantage.

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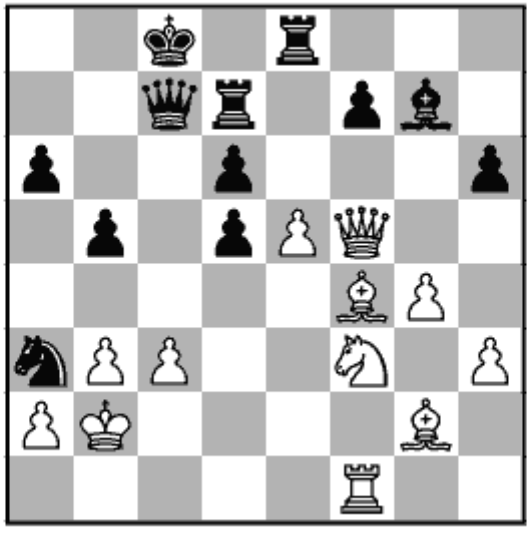


Solution 465: White to play

Gu Tianlu – Chen Fan

Tianjin 2018/19

Since White can't take on d6, he needs to support the e5-pawn.

27 Re1!

After 27 Kxa3? dxe5 28 Bd2 (28 Bh2 Qxc3 –+) 28…e4 (as played in the game) White's position is falling apart: 29 Nd4 Qa5+ 30 Kb2 Bxd4 –+.

27…Re6!

Now the game ends by force in a draw, but after other moves Black risks being worse: 27…Qa5?! 28 Bd2 Re6 (28…dxe5? 29 Nxe5 Bxe5 30 Rxe5 +–) 29 Nd4! Rxe5 30 Rxe5 dxe5 31 Nc6! Qb6 32 Bxd5 +/– with a large advantage.

28 Kxa3 dxe5

28…Qc5+?! 29 Kb2 Qf2+ 30 Qc2 +/–.

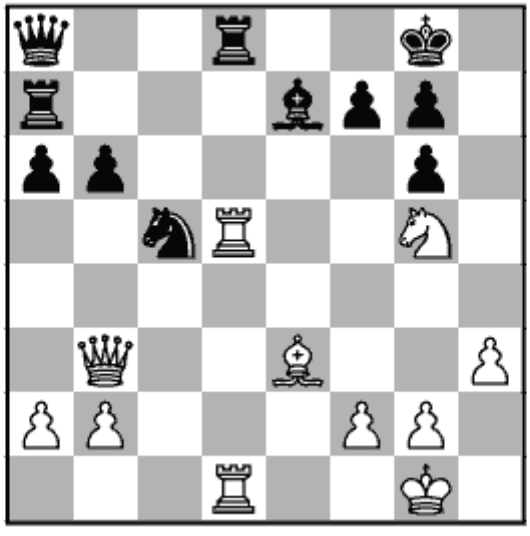
29 Bxe5 Bxe5 30 Nxe5 Qxc3

30…d4 31 Nxd7 Qa5+ 32 Kb2 Qxc3+ 33 Ka3 Qa5+ =.

31 Nxd7

and the game should end in perpetual check: **31…Qxe1** (31…Qa5+ 32 Kb2 Qd2+ =) **32 Nb6+ Kb7 33 Qxd5+ Kxb6 34 Qd8+ Kc5 35 Qd5+ Kb6 =**.

back



Solution 466: White to play

Guan Runpei – Lu Miaoyi

Tianjin 2018/19

Black's main problem is the unfortunate position of his queen on a8, but White has only a fleeting opportunity to exploit this factor.

22 Rxd8+!

Not:

a) 22 Bxc5? (as played in the game) 22…Rxd5! 23 Rxd5 Bxc5 =.

b) 22 Qxb6? Rxd5 23 Rxd5 Qxd5 24 Qxa7 Bd6! gives Black quite good compensation. 25 g3 is met by 25…f6.

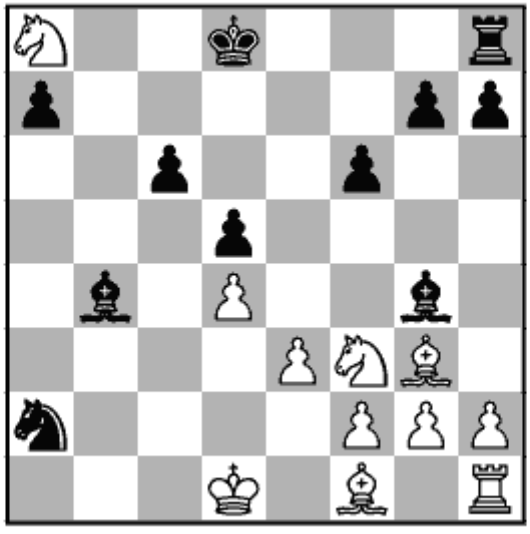
22…Bxd8 23 Bxc5 bxc5

23…Bxg5 24 Qxb6 +–.

24 Nxf7! Rxf7 25 Rd7 +–

White wins since the bishop on d8 is blocking the queen.

back



Solution 467: Black to play

Maisuradze – Wang Zijian

Tianjin 2018/19

Black's target is the white king and his priority should be to deprive it of flight-squares.

17…Bf5!

17…Kd7? is bad due to 18 Kc2 Rxa8 19 Kb3 +–, while 17… Nc3+? 18 Kc2 Ne4 (as played in the game) is met by 19 Bd3! Nxg3 20 Rb1! (after 20 hxg3? Kd7 21 Rb1 Rb8! Black is suddenly saved: 22 Bxh7 a5 is unclear) 20…Bd6 21 hxg3 +–.

18 Nh4

Or: 18 Ba6 Kd7 –/+; 18 Nc7? Nc3+ 19 Ke1 Ne4+ 20 Kd1 Nxg3 –+.

18…Bb1

A little more complicated is 18…Nc3+!? 19 Kc1 Ba3+ 20 Kd2 Ne4+ 21 Kd1 Nxg3 22 hxg3 Be4 with unclear play.

19 Nc7 Nc3+ 20 Kd2

Not 20 Kc1? Ba3+ 21 Kd2 Ne4+ 22 Ke1 Nxg3 –+.

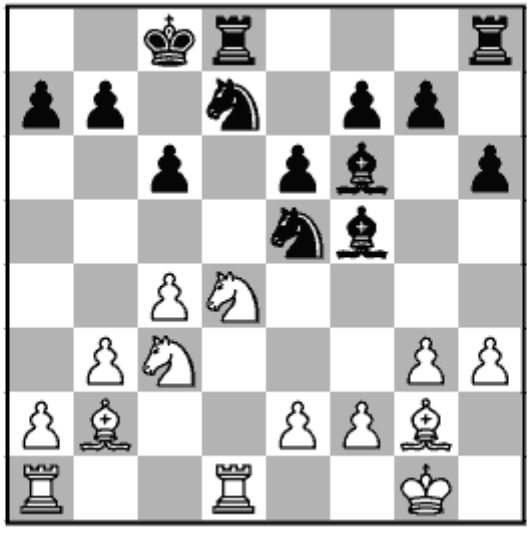
20…Na2+

The double check 20…Ne4++? is wrong due to 21 Kc1 +–.

21 Ke2 Nc3+ 22 Kd2 =

with a repetition of moves (and not 22 Kf3? g5 –+).

back



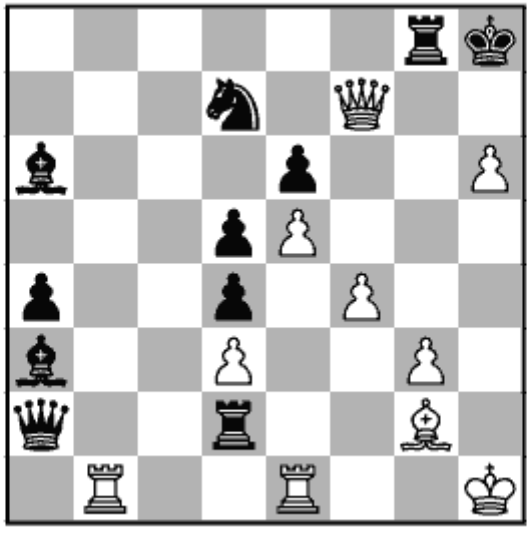
Solution 468: Black to play

Santanna – Kiewra

Burlingame 2019

Black could have suddenly seized a large advantage with **15… Nd3! 16 exd3** (16 Nxf5 Nxb2 17 Nd6+ Kc7 18 Rdc1 Kxd6 –/+ and Black will be a pawn up once he has been forced to play …Nxc4) **16…Bxd4**, when White has a bad game due to the weak d3-pawn. After **17 Na4** (or 17 Bf1 Ne5 18 Rac1 Rd7 –/+) **17…Ne5 18 Bf1 g5** Black's advantage is close to decisive due to the wretched locations of the white pieces.

back



Solution 469: White to play

D.Fryer – C.Metcalfe (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

White is running out of pieces, so his only chance of salvation lies in the exposed black king.

31 Rb8! Nxb8

31…Bf8 32 Rxf8 (after 32 h7 Rg7 33 Rxf8+ Nxf8 34 Qxf8+ Kxh7 35 Qf6! = White is also saved by a miracle as Black can't hide his king anywhere) 32…Nxf8 33 Qf6+ Kh7 34 Qe7+ (34 Qf7+? Kxh6 –+) 34…Kxh6 35 Qh4+ Kg7 36 Qf6+ with perpetual check.

32 Qf6+ Kh7 33 Qf7+ Kxh6 34 Qf6+ Kh7

34…Rg6?? 35 Qh8#.

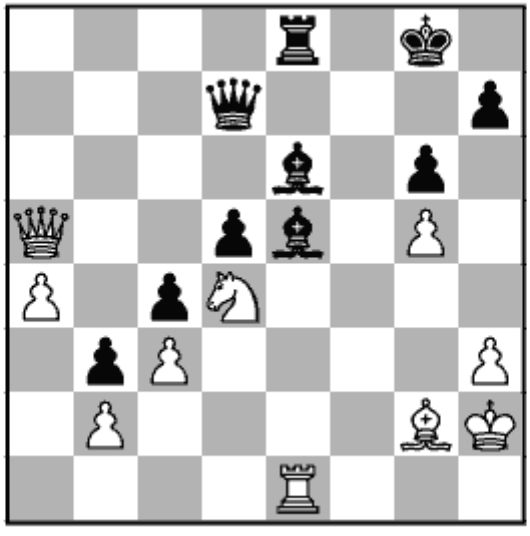
35 Qh4+!

But not 35 Qf7+? Rg7 36 Qh5+ Kg8 –+.

35…Kg6 36 Qf6+ =

with perpetual check.

back



Solution 470: White to play

L.Butt – Royal

Hastings 2018/19

In the game, White was scared to walk into a pin, and missed the path to victory.

38 Rxe5

White should have played this, as the tactics work in his favour. And not 38 Kh1? Bxd4 (38…Bf7!? is unclear) 39 cxd4 Kg7 with a roughly equal position.

38…Qd6 39 Nc6!

After 39 Nf3? Bf7 = Black survives because the knight is blocking the g2-bishop.

39…Qxc6

39…Bf7 40 Bxd5 +–.

40 Rxd5!

The surest way to win. White should certainly avoid 40 Bxd5? Qd6 41 Bxe6+ Kh8! += and 40 Rxe6? Rxe6 41 Bxd5 Qd6+ 42 Kg2 h6!, when with precise play Black can hang on. The only worthy alternative is the exchange of queens: 40 Qb5!? Qxb5 41 axb5 d4 42 b6 +– also keeps a decisive advantage.

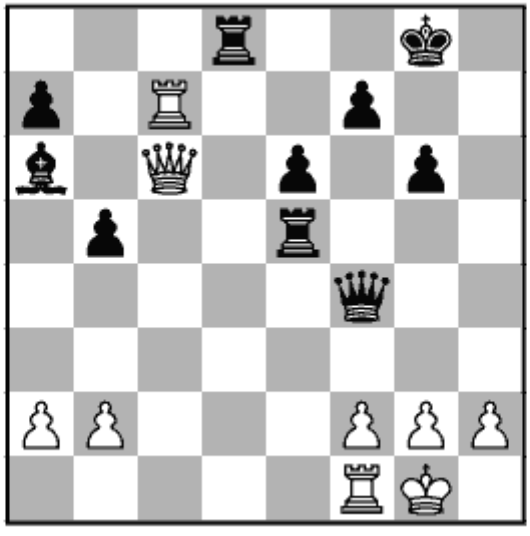
40…Bf5

40…Bf7 41 Rd8 +–.

41 Re5 Qd6 42 Qd5+

with an easy win.

back



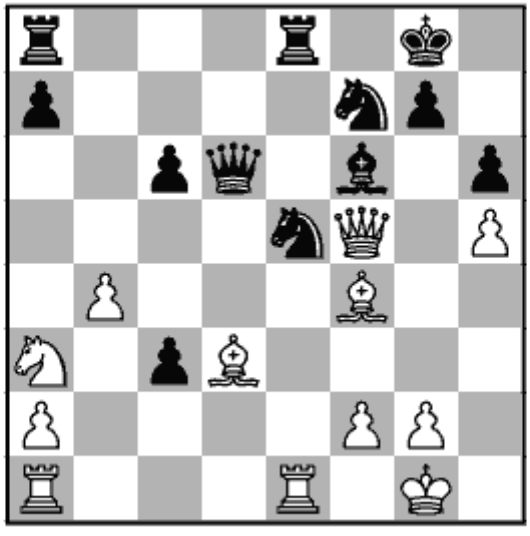
Solution 471: White to play

M.Wilson – Heinsohn

Hastings 2018/19

It should be obvious that White can't take on a6 at once, but the game in fact ended 23 Qxa6? Rh5 0-1. The correct path is: **23 Rxa7! Bc8 24 Qc7!** (now Black can't protect the bishop because of the pin) **24…Re8 25 Ra8 Bd7 26 Ra7** (or 26 Rd8 Bc6 27 Rc8! =) **26…Bc8 27 Ra8** with a repetition of moves.

back



Solution 472: White to play

Kravtsiv – Linster

Pardubice rapid 2012

26 Bc4!

Now Black does not have time to break the pin, and loses.

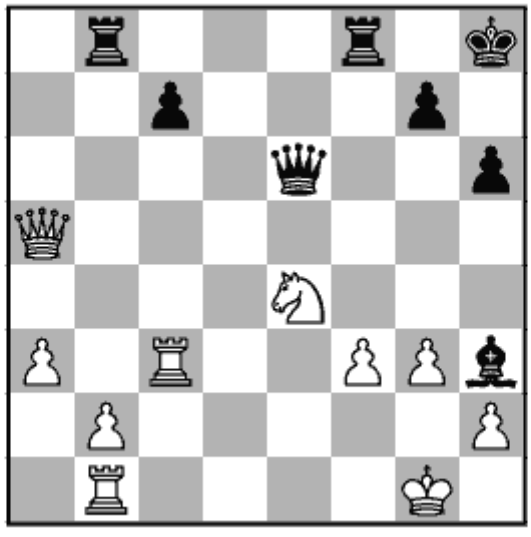
After 26 Be4? (as played in the game) 26…Rad8 Black is OK, as there is no need to fear the check on h7. Both 27 Nc2 Bg5 and 27 Nc4 Qxb4 28 Nxe5 Bxe5 are unclear.

26…Kf8

Or 26…Re7 27 Rad1 (27 Bxf7+!? +–) 27…Qxb4 28 Bxe5 +–.

27 Bxf7 Kxf7 28 Nc4 +–

back



Solution 473: Black to play

M.Markov – Kravtsiv (variation)

Kazan tt 2013

There are two tempting moves, but only one leads to victory.

29…Rxb2!

Not 29…Qa2? 30 Rcc1 Rxf3 31 Qh5! Rxb2 32 Rxb2 Qxb2 33 Qxf3 with a drawn position.

After 29…Rxf3?! 30 Rxf3 Qxe4 31 Rbf1 Rxb2 Black's advantage is insufficient for victory. White can play 32 Rf8+ Kh7 33 Qa8, and with further accurate play will hold the game.

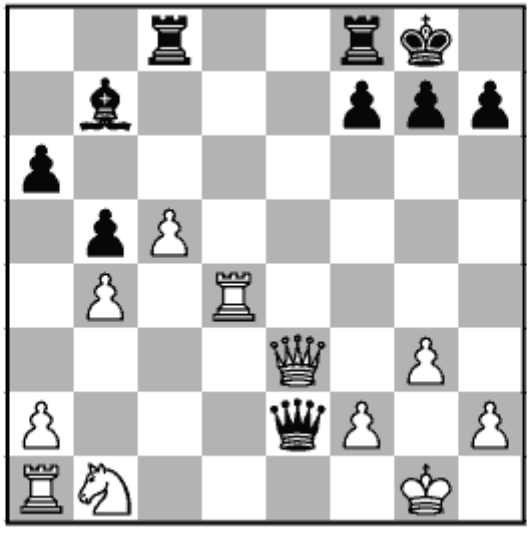
30 Rxb2

30 Ra1 Rd8!? leaves White's king defenceless; e.g., 31 Qxc7 Qd5 –+, 31 Rxc7 Qa2 –+ or 31 Re3 Rdd2 –+.

30…Qxe4!

with irresistible threats: **31 Kf2** (31 Rc1 Qe3+ –+) **31…Qd4+ 32 Re3 Qxb2+ –+**.

back



Solution 474: Black to play

T.Anton – Kravtsiv

Kazan tt 2013

22…Qb2! 23 Qc3 Rfe8

White's position falls apart because of the mating threats.

24 Rd1

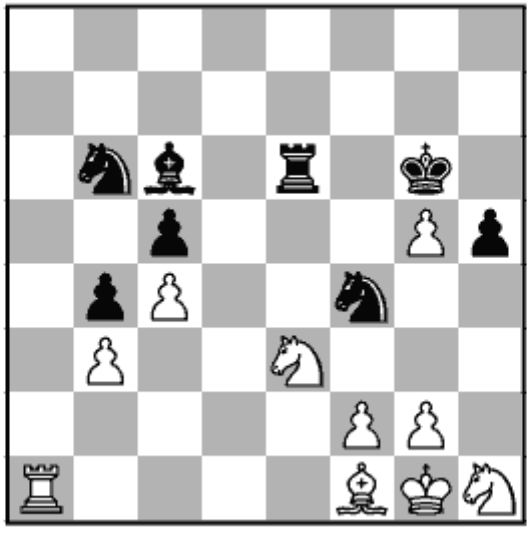
24 c6 Bxc6 –+.

24…Rcd8 25 Rxd8

Or 25 Rf1 Qe2 26 c6 Bc8 27 Na3 Rd3 –+.

25…Rxd8 26 c6 Rd1+ 0-1

back



Solution 475: Black to play

Cline – Gaffagan

Burlingame 2019

The immediate capture on g5 loses. Black should first reinforce his f4-knight.

42…h4!

After 42…Kxg5? 43 g3 Ng6 44 Bh3 Rd6 (44…Re8 45 Ra6 +–) 45 f4+ Kf6 46 Nf2 +– the pawn on f4 greatly restricts the black pieces, giving White a decisive advantage. 46…h4 is well met by 47 Ra7.

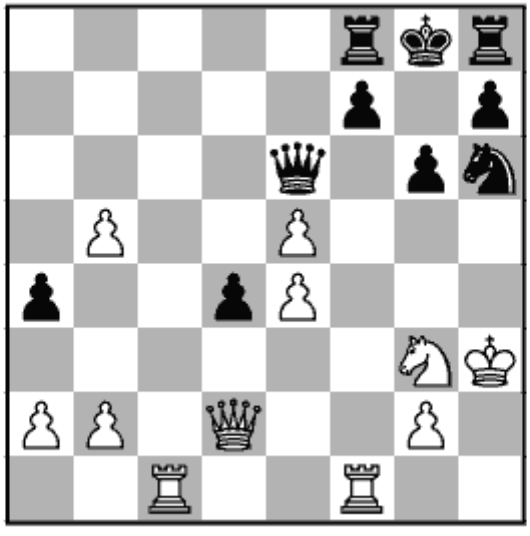
43 g3

43 Ra7 Nd7 +=.

43…hxg3 44 Nxg3 Kxg5

Black is only slightly worse, and the game should certainly end in a draw.

back



Solution 476: White to play

Swiercz – C.Yoo (variation)

Burlingame 2019

32 Nf5!

Moving the king by 32 Kh2? is wrong, as it gives Black time to activate his pieces. 32…Ng4+ 33 Kg1 Qxe5 leaves the game unclear.

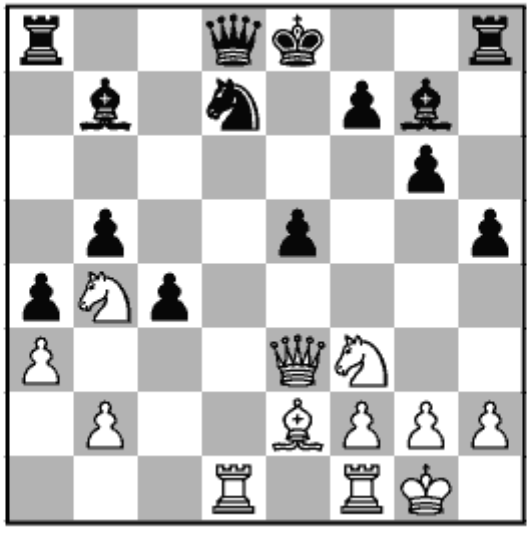
32…Nxf5

After 32…gxf5 33 Rc6 Qxe5 34 Qxh6 Black's game is hopeless in view of White's mating threats. For example: 34… fxe4 35 Rcf6!? Re8 36 R1f4 +–.

33 exf5 Qxe5 34 b6 Rb8 35 Rc6

White is winning because Black can't bring his h8-rook into play. **35…Qb5** is well met by **36 Qf4 Qxf5+ 37 Qxf5 gxf5 38 Rxf5** +–.

back



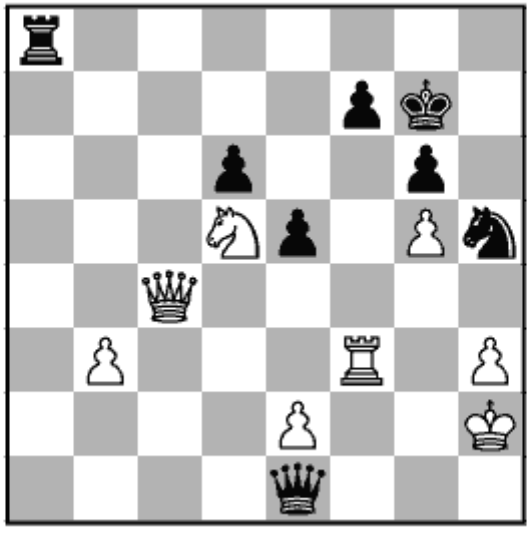
Solution 477: White to play

Hilby – Sevian (variation)

Burlingame 2019

White wins the game with a nice tactical blow: **22 Nxe5! Bxe5 23 Rxd7 Kxd7** (23…Qxd7 24 Qxe5+ Qe6 25 Qxh8+ Ke7 26 Qc3 +–) **24 Qxe5** (Black is lost because his king is too weak) **24…Kc8 25 Rd1 Qe8** (25…Qf8 26 Rd6 +–) **26 Qc5+ Kb8 27 Bf3** with irresistible threats. **27…Ra7** is well met by **28 Qb6 Ka8 29 Nd5 +–**.

back



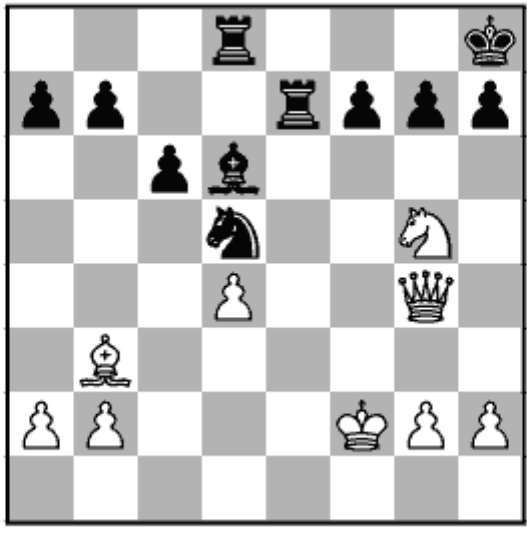
Solution 478: Black to play

Colas – Hevia (variation)

Burlingame 2019

The main thing is not to miss the threat against f7: **50…Rc8!** (50…Ra1? walks into 51 Rxf7+! Kxf7 52 Nf6+ Ke7 53 Qc7+ with mate in three more moves) **51 Qxc8** (51 Qd3 Rc1 –+; 51 Rxf7+ Kxf7 52 Qxc8 Qf2+ 53 Kh1 Ng3#) **51…Qxe2+ 52 Kg1 Qxf3** with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 479: White to play

Snape – D.Fowler (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

White's game is hopeless unless he can find an effective tactical blow.

25 Bxd5!

After 25 Qf5? g6 26 Qxf7 Rb8 White loses because there is no check on f6: 27 Qf3 Bf4 28 Bxd5 Bxg5 –+.

25…cxd5 26 Qf5

Not 26 Qh5? h6 27 Nxf7+ Rxf7+ 28 Qxf7 Rf8 –+.

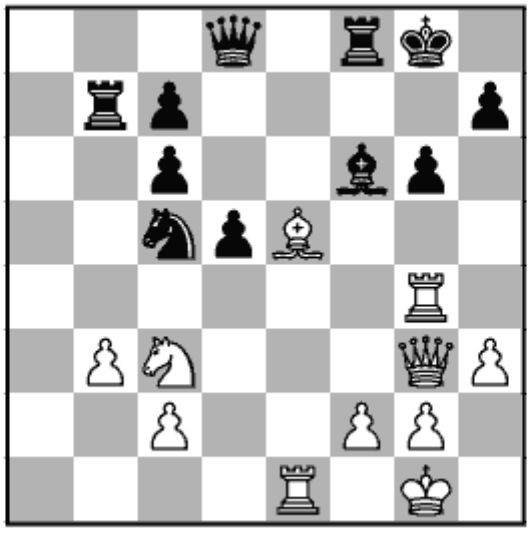
26…g6 27 Qxf7! Rxf7+

27…b6 28 h3!? is a funny position where the rook can't move from d8, and Black has no way to strengthen his game. 28… Red7 29 Ke2 Re7+ =.

28 Nxf7+ Kg7 29 Nxd8

with an equal endgame.

back



Solution 480: White to play

A.Gandhi – Regmi (based on)

Mumbai 2018/19

White wins with the help of a rook sacrifice.

30 Rxg6+! hxg6 31 Qxg6+ Kh8 32 Re3!

White needs to bring his rook into the attack while the king is still on h8. He gains nothing from 32 Qh6+ Kg8 33 Qg6+ (33 Re3?? Bxe5 34 Rxe5 Qf6 –+) 33…Kh8.

32…Qe7

32…Bxe5 33 Rxe5 +–.

33 Qh5+

Or 33 Rg3!? +–.

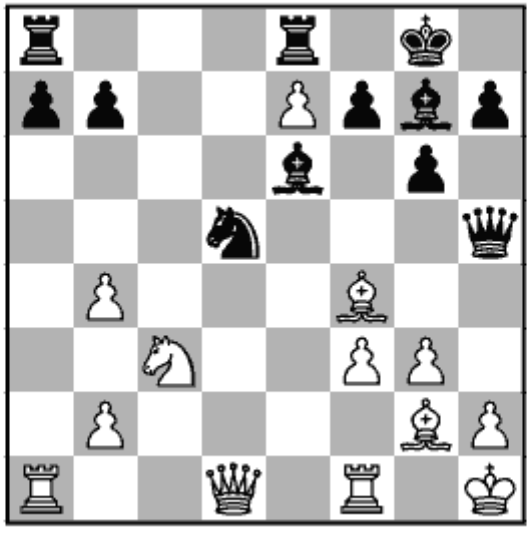
33…Kg8

33…Qh7 34 Bxf6+ +–.

34 Rg3+ Bg7 35 Rxg7+ +–

with an easy win.

back



Solution 481: White to play

Soham – Banerjee

Mumbai 2018/19

20 Ra5!

Targeting the awkwardly-placed black queen on h5. Instead after 20 Nxd5? Qxd5 21 Qxd5 Bxd5 the pawn on e7 brings White no particular advantage. For example, 22 Rad1 Bc6 23 Bd6 Bxb2 is unclear.

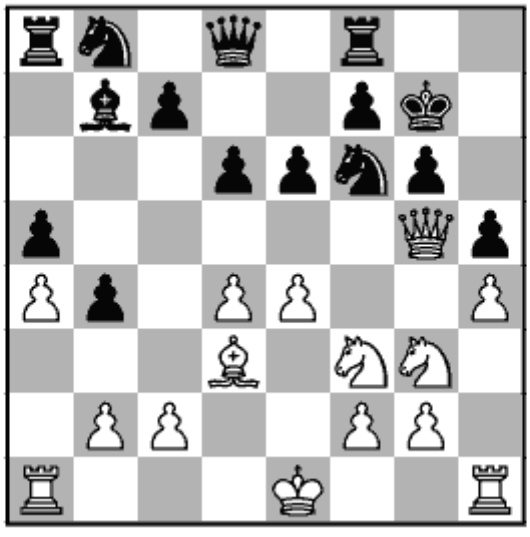
20…Nxc3

No better is 20…Bxc3 21 bxc3 (played in the game) 21… Rac8 (21…Nxc3 22 Qd2 Nb5 23 g4 +–) 22 g4 Qh4 23 Rxd5 +–.

21 bxc3 b5 22 Bd6 +–

If Black takes on c3, then he will lose the a7-pawn: **22…Bc4 23 Rg1 Bxc3 24 f4**.

back



Solution 482: Black to play

Lama – Subrota

Mumbai 2018/19

Black's main problem is that the h5-pawn is vulnerable.

14…Kg8!

The attempt to defend the pawn directly with 14…Rh8? falls apart due to 15 e5 Nd5 16 Nxh5+ +– (as played in the game). 14…Kh7? loses to 15 e5 Nfd7 16 Qxh5+ +–.

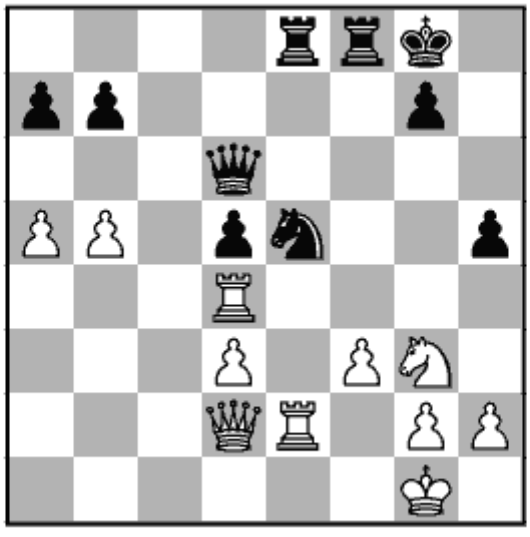
15 e5?!

Slightly better is 15 0-0!? Ng4 +=.

15…Ng4!

With h6 covered, Black has solved all his problems. Not 15… Nd5?? 16 Qh6 +–.

back



Solution 483: Black to play

M.Hasan – Vatsal

Mumbai 2018/19

Black roots the white king out of his shelter thanks to a pin:

29…Qc5!

29…Rxf3? 30 Kh1 is unclear.

30 Qb4

30 Qb2 Nxd3 –+.

30…Qc1+ 31 Kf2

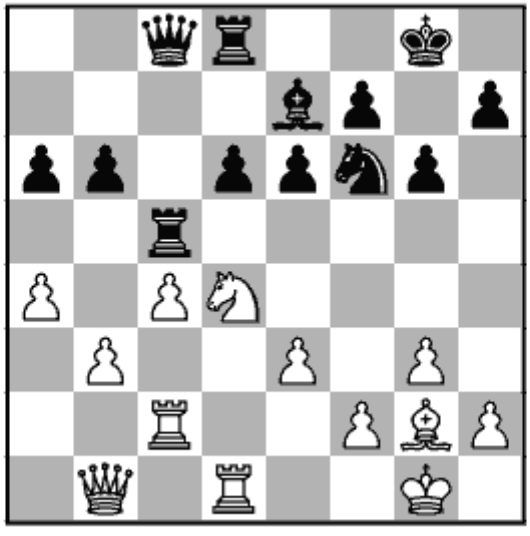
31 Qe1 Qxe1+ 32 Rxe1 Nxf3+ –+.

31…h4!

Rather than grabbing an exchange, Black ruins the white king's defences. In the game 31…Ng4+? 32 Rxg4 hxg4 33 Qxg4 led to unclear play, while after 31…Qd1 32 Qe1 Ng4+ 33 Rxg4 Black faces a lengthy battle to exploit his extra exchange.

32 Nf1 h3 –+

back



Solution 484: White to play

Nagarajan – A.Grabinsky

Burlingame 2019

With a few forcing moves, White can achieve a strategically won game.

22 b4! Rc7 23 b5 axb5

After 23…Re8 24 a5!? (24 Nc6 +/–) 24…bxa5!? 25 b6 Rc5 26 Nb3 Black must give up the exchange since 26…Rf5?! fails to 27 c5 dxc5 28 Nxa5 +–.

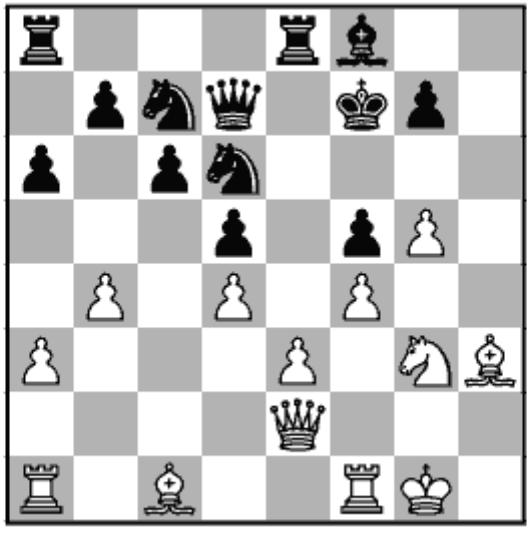
24 axb5 Bf8

24…Rxc4 25 Nc6 +–.

25 Nc6 Re8

This was played in the game. Now **26 Ra2** gives White an almost decisive advantage thanks to his powerful knight on c6.

back



Solution 485: White to play

Saidy – Polavaram

Burlingame 2019

White clearly shouldn't allow Black to shore up his defences by playing …g6.

26 g6+! Kxg6

Slightly better is the modest 26…Ke7 27 Qh5 Kd8 28 Nxf5 +/–.

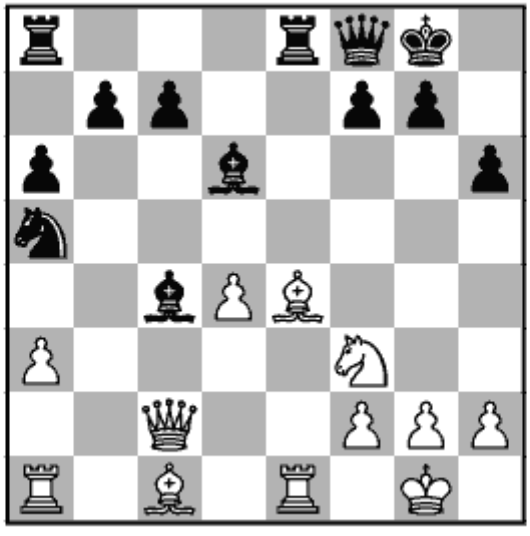
27 Qh5+ Kf6 28 Nxf5!

The imprecise 28 Qg5+?! Kf7 29 Nxf5 Qe6! 30 Ra2 Ne4 leaves Black fine.

28…Nxf5 29 Qg5+ Kf7 30 Bxf5 Qd6 31 Ra2

This was played in the game. White is close to victory thanks to his powerful bishop on f5, and **31…Qf6** is well met by **32 Rg2 Qxg5 33 fxg5** +–.

back



Solution 486: White to play

J.Williams – T.Kung

Burlingame 2019

If White can remove the knight from a5, then the c4-bishop will be left undefended.

18 Bd2!

White gains nothing from 18 Qc3?! f5 19 Bxb7 Rxe1+ 20 Nxe1 Nxb7 21 Qxc4+ Qf7, with unclear play.

18…Nb3 19 Qxc4

19 Bxb7 Nxa1 20 Qxc4 Rxe1+ 21 Bxe1 Rb8 –/+.

19…Nxa1

As of right now, White has given up the exchange, but the knight will not escape from a1. After **20 Qd3!?** (20 Qa2 Bxa3 21 Qxa1?! +/– was played in the game) **20…Rxe4** (20…Bxa3 21 Rxa1 Bb4 22 Bxb7 +–) **21 Rxe4 Re8** (21…Bxa3 22 Re1 Bb2 23 Rb1 +–) **22 Rxe8 Qxe8 23 Qc3** White will take the knight, with a decisive advantage.

back

Solution 487: White to play

Daggupati – Ruiz Castillo

Burlingame 2019

White can launch an attack on the black king by exploiting the fact that the black queen is undefended.

36 f5! Nxe4

36…exf5 37 Re7+! Rxe7 38 Rxe7+ Kxe7 39 Qxc6 +–.

37 fxg6++

37 fxe6++!? +– is another idea.

37…Ke7

Or 37…Kxg6 38 Qxh5+ Kh7 39 Qf7+, mating.

38 Nxe4

The simplest, though there are other winning moves. For instance, 38 Qf7+ Kd8 39 Nxe4 +– was played in the game.

38…Rf8 39 Bf6+ Ke8 40 Rd1

Black has no defence against the deadly threat of 41 Nd6+.

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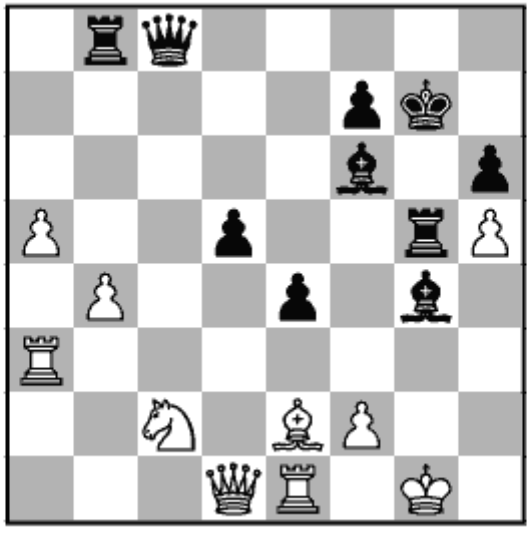


Solution 488: White to play

A.Lee – Ynojosa (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black has some very active pieces, so it makes sense for White to exchange them off.

37 Bxg4!

After 37 Rg3? Be6 38 Rxg5+ Bxg5 –+ White's pieces are too passive.

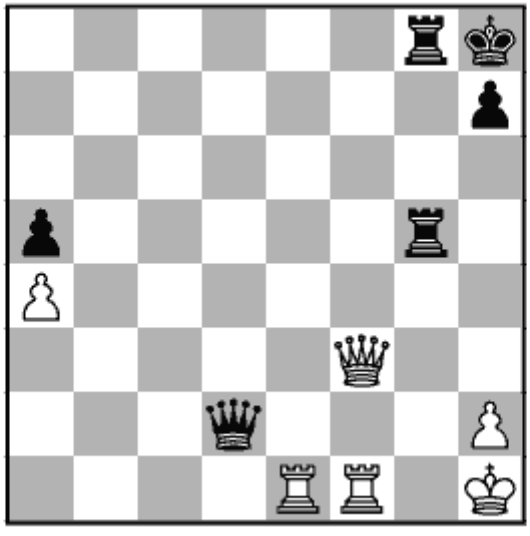
37…Rxg4+ 38 Qxg4+!

Not 38 Rg3? Rxg3+ 39 fxg3 Qh3 –+.

38…Qxg4+ 39 Rg3 Qxg3+ 40 fxg3

with a playable game and roughly level chances.

back



Solution 489: Black to play

D.Boros – Stukopin (variation)

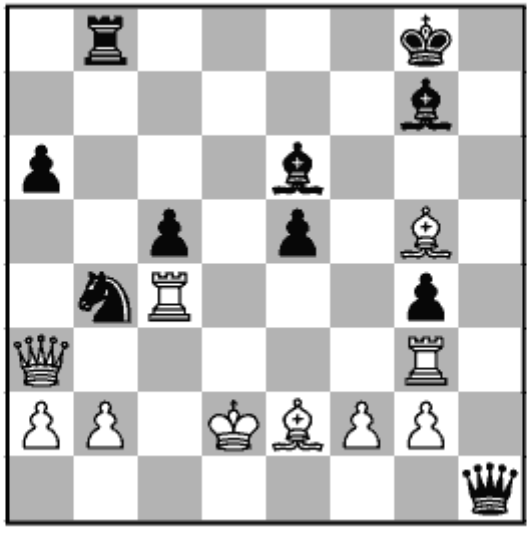
Burlingame 2019

48…Rf5!

Now White can't keep control of both g2 and h5. Not 48… Rg2? 49 Qf6+ =.

49 Qe4 Qxh2+! 50 Kxh2 Rh5+ 51 Qh4 Rxh4#

back



Solution 490: Black to play

Macieja – Negi (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black must attack without delay to deny White the chance to return the exchange by 29 Rxb4, eliminating a key attacking piece.

28…Bh6!

After 28…Rb7? 29 Rxb4! Rxb4 30 b3 White is OK. The game is unclear after 30…Rd4+ 31 Rd3 or 30…Bh6 31 Bxh6 Qxh6+ 32 Kd1.

29 Qe3 Rd8+! 30 Bxd8

30 Kc3 Nd5+ –+.

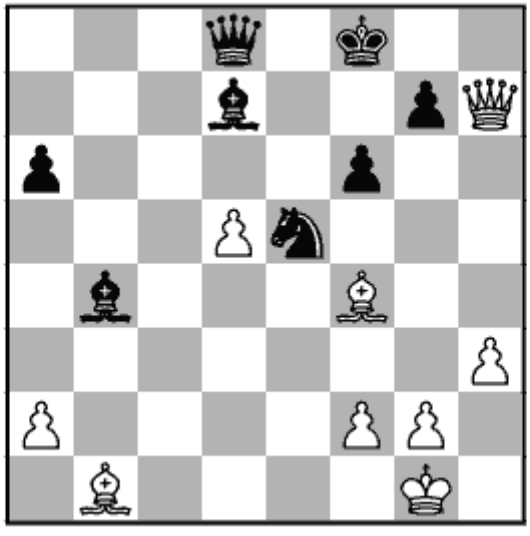
30…Bxe3+ 31 fxe3

31 Rxe3 Qb1 –+.

31…Qb1 –+

with an easy win.

back



Solution 491: White to play

A.Hong – Javakhadze

Burlingame 2019

Rather than grabbing the g7-pawn, White should set his sights higher, as he can win in a few moves.

37 Bxe5!

37 Qh8+? Ke7 38 Qxg7+ Kd6 =.

37…fxe5

37…Qe7 38 Bg3 +–.

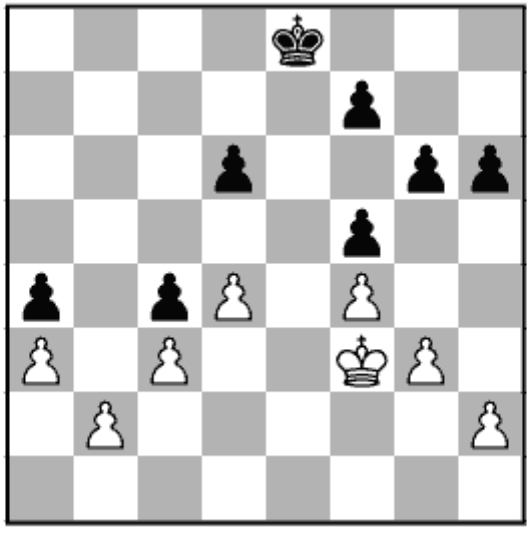
38 Qh8+ Ke7 39 Qh4+ 1-0

Black loses his queen after **39…Ke8 40 Bg6+** +–.

back

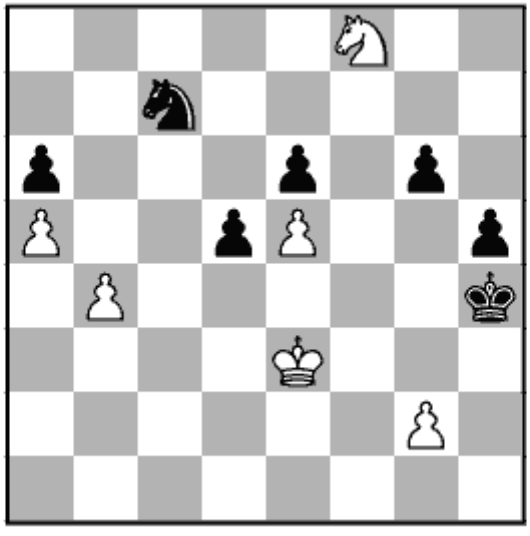
10: Endgame Challenges

Next up are 66 endgame exercises. Like the endgame chapter in Part 1, the difficulty starts at level 1, but then ramps up quickly. And this time it goes all the way up to level 5: the last 12 puzzles all have our top difficulty rating. Calculate well!



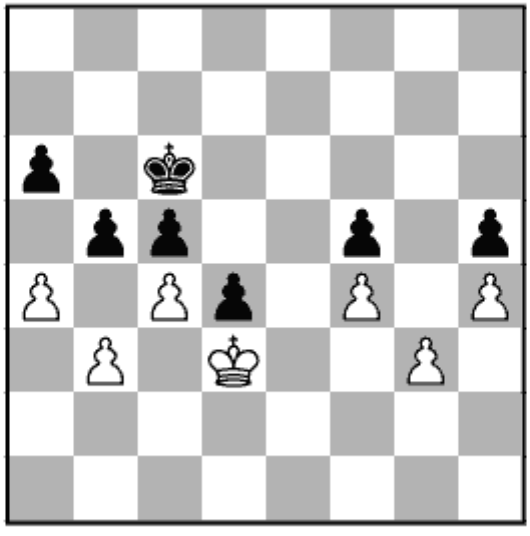
Puzzle 492: White to play

answer



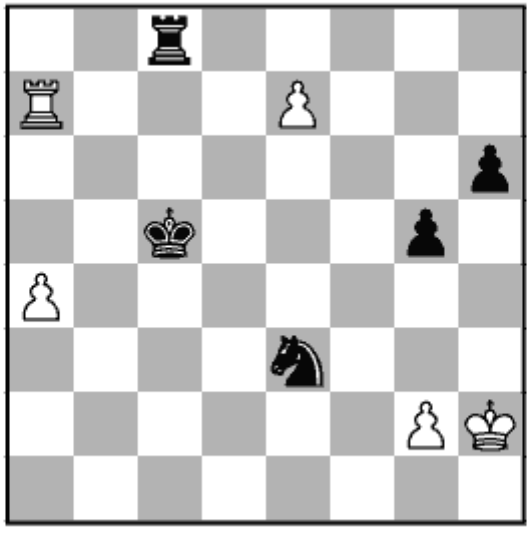
Puzzle 493: White to play

answer



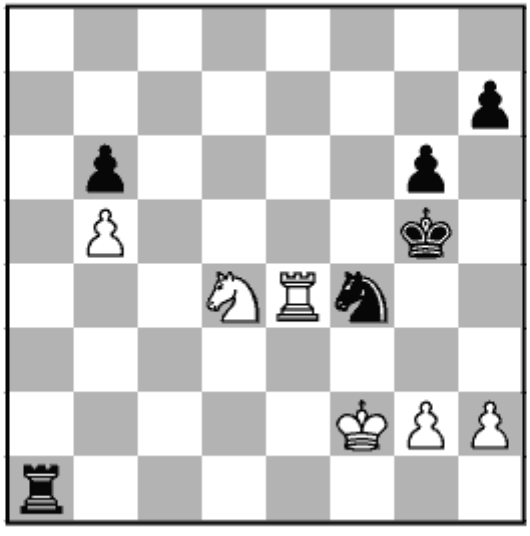
Puzzle 494: White to play

answer



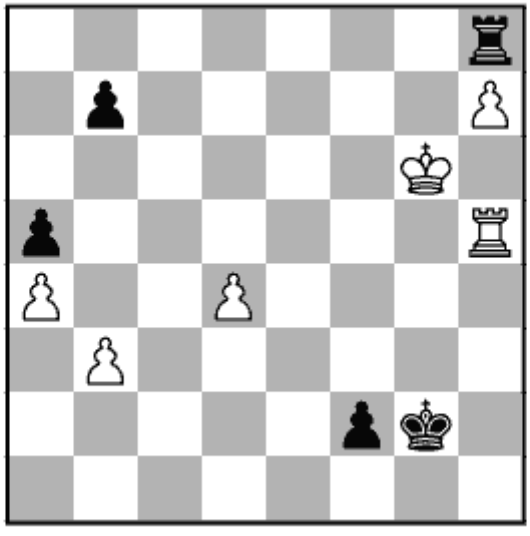
Puzzle 495: White to play

answer



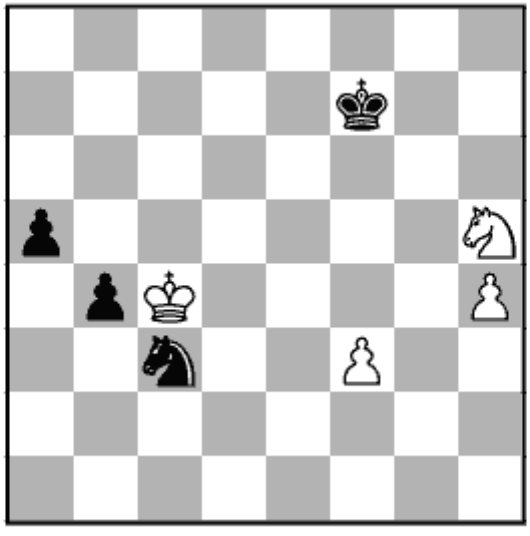
Puzzle 496: White to play

answer



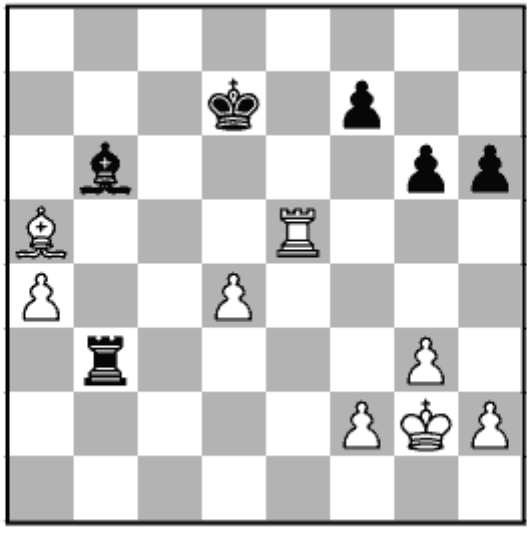
Puzzle 497: White to play

answer



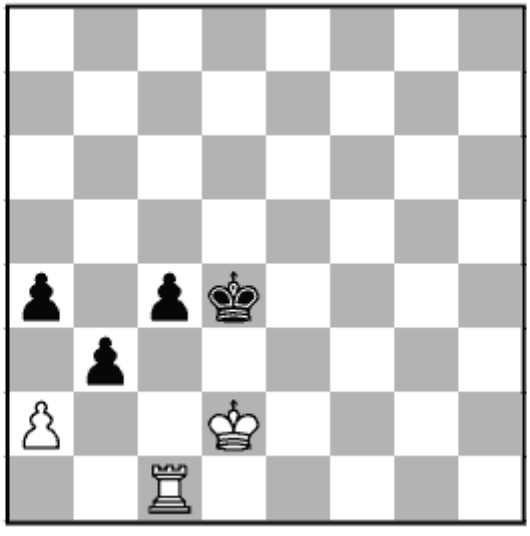
Puzzle 498: Black to play

answer



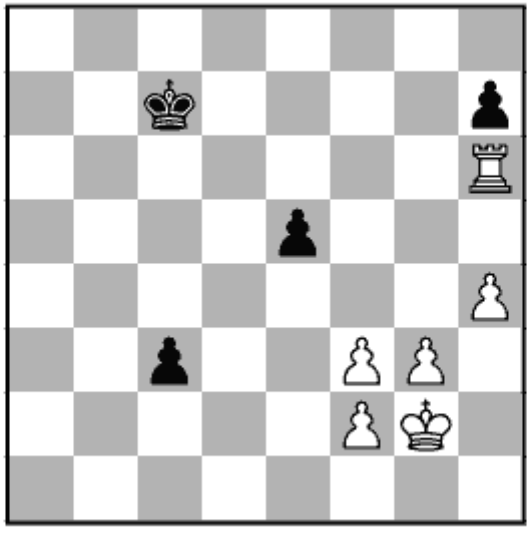
Puzzle 499: Black to play

answer



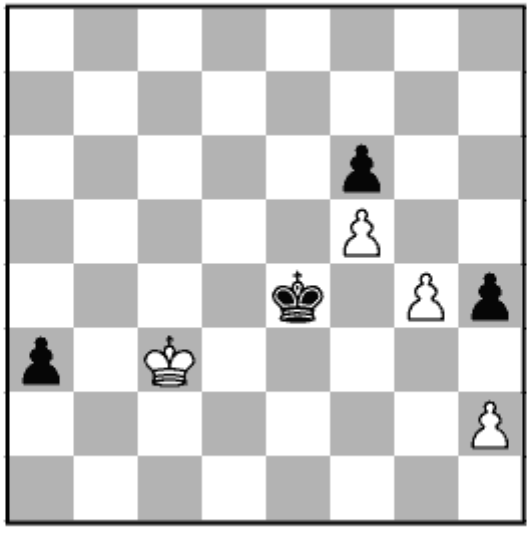
Puzzle 500: Black to play

answer



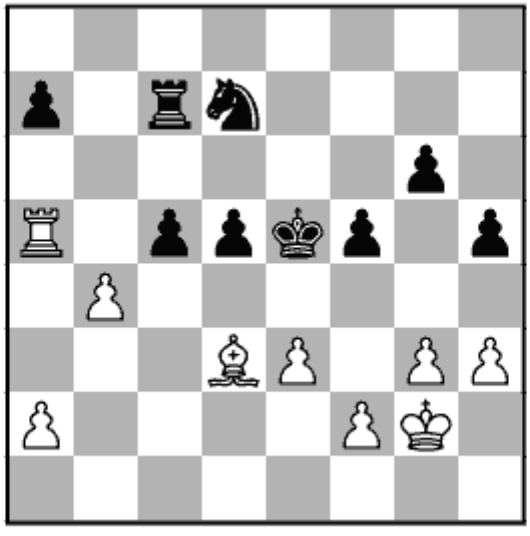
Puzzle 501: White to play

answer



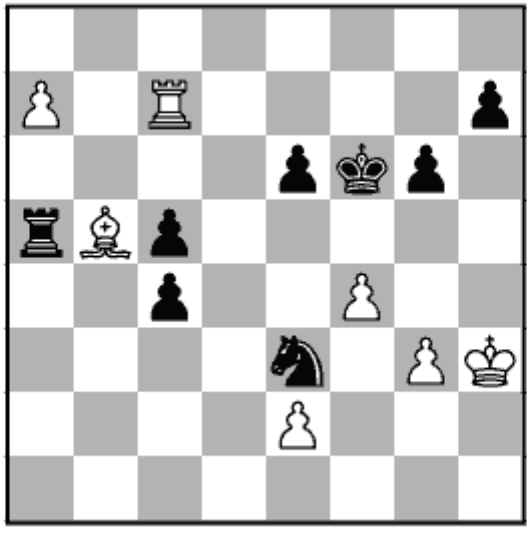
Puzzle 502: Black to play

answer



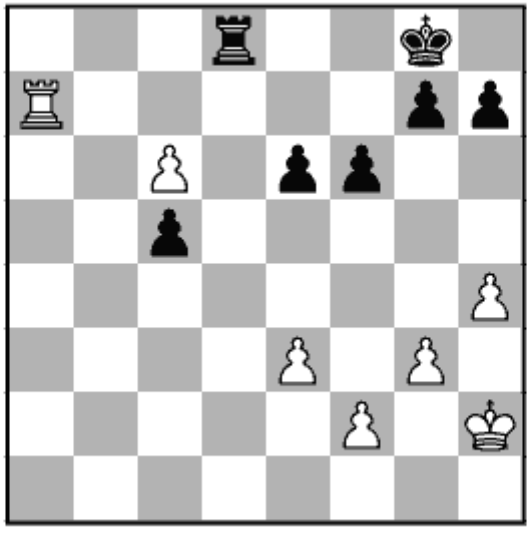
Puzzle 503: White to play

answer



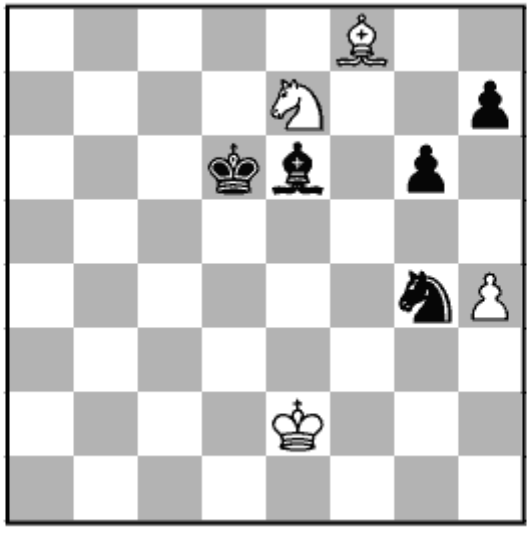
Puzzle 504: White to play

answer



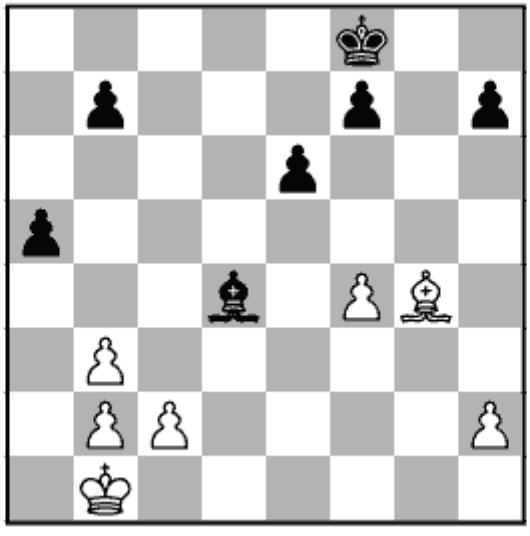
Puzzle 505: White to play

answer



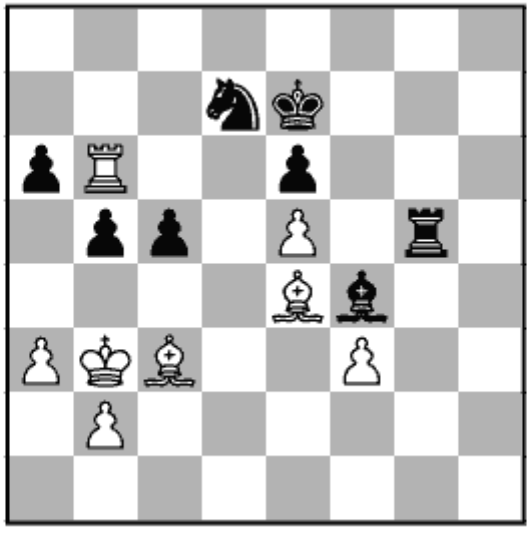
Puzzle 506: Black to play

answer



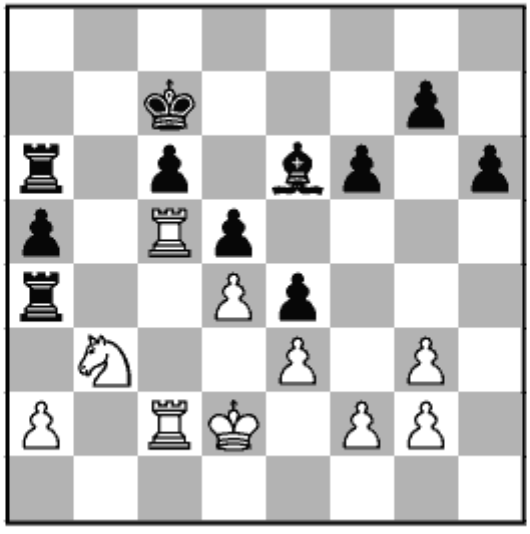
Puzzle 507: Black to play

answer



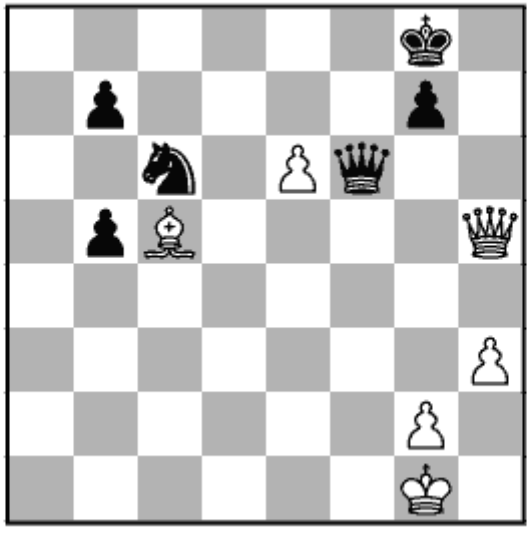
Puzzle 508: White to play

answer



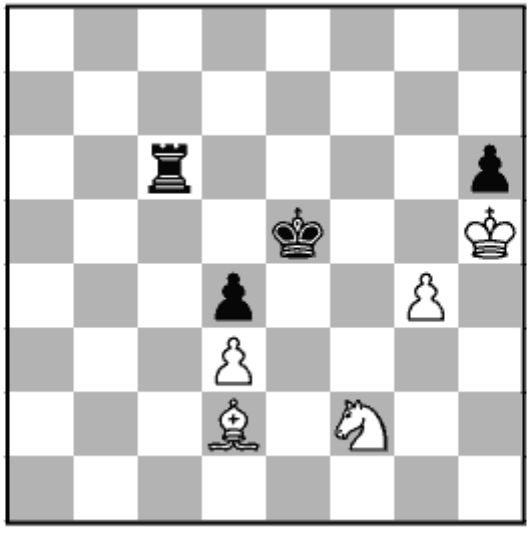
Puzzle 509: White to play

answer



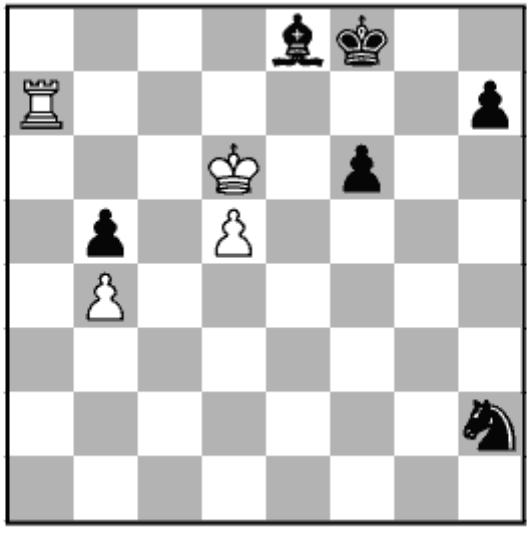
Puzzle 510: White to play

answer



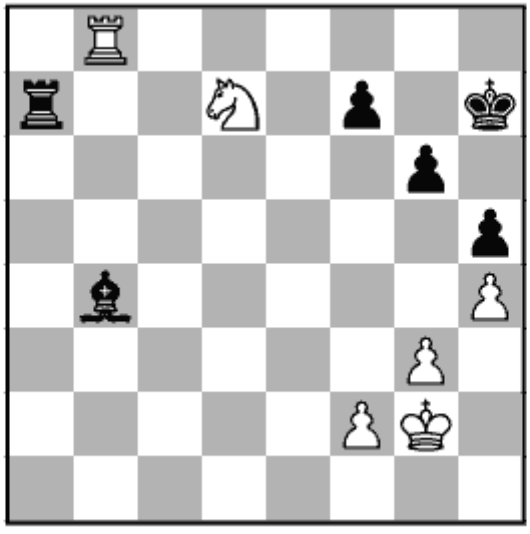
Puzzle 511: Black to play

answer



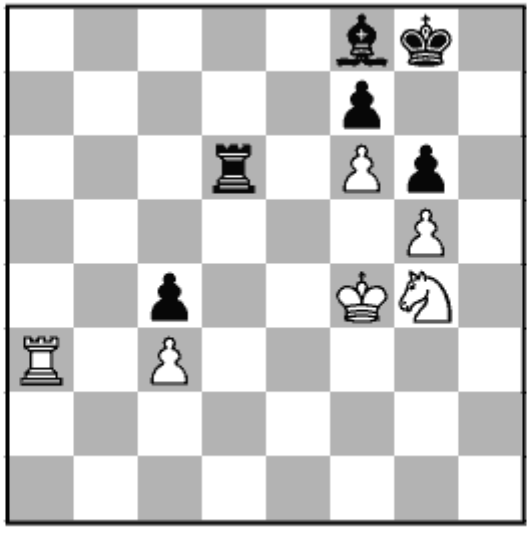
Puzzle 512: White to play

answer



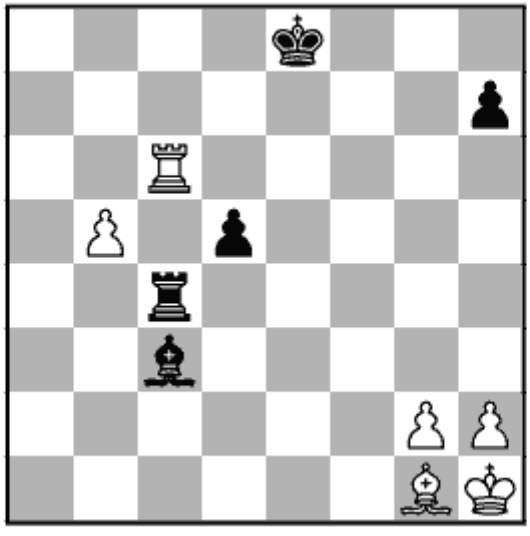
Puzzle 513: White to play

answer



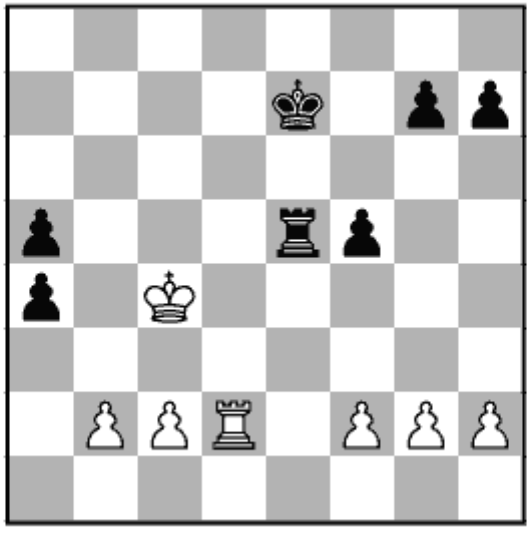
Puzzle 514: Black to play

answer



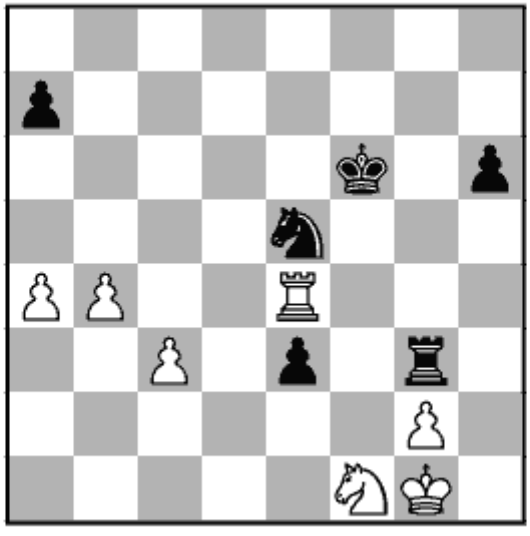
Puzzle 515: White to play

answer



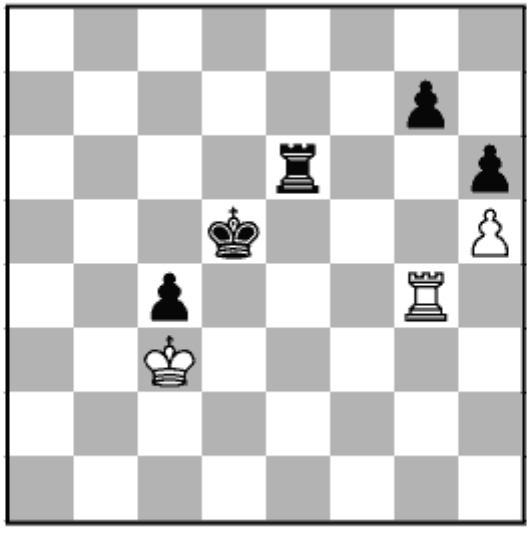
Puzzle 516: White to play

answer



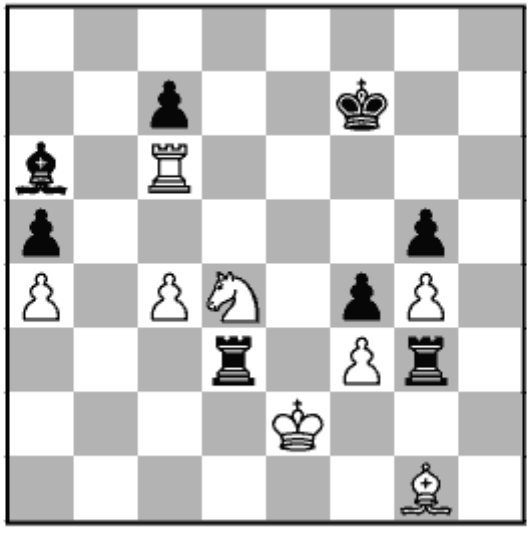
Puzzle 517: Black to play

answer



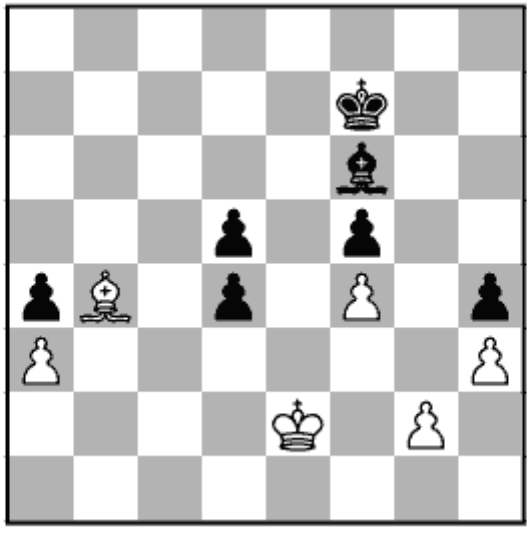
Puzzle 518: White to play

answer



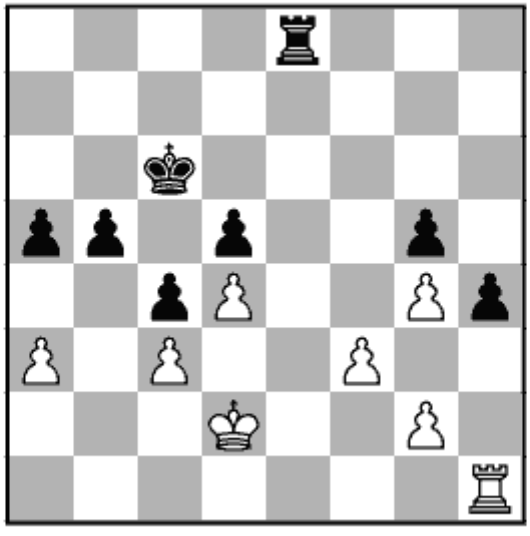
Puzzle 519: Black to play

answer



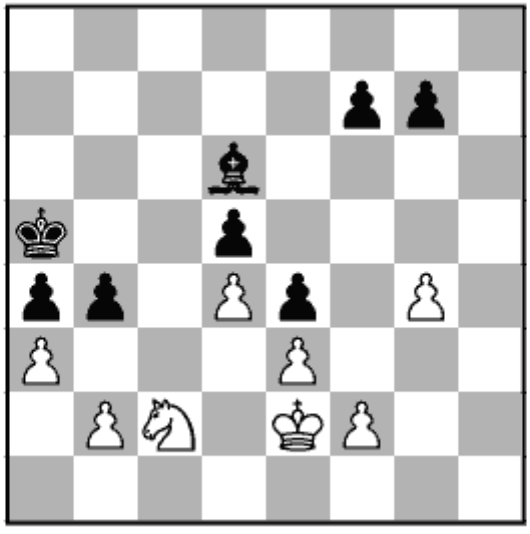
Puzzle 520: White to play

answer



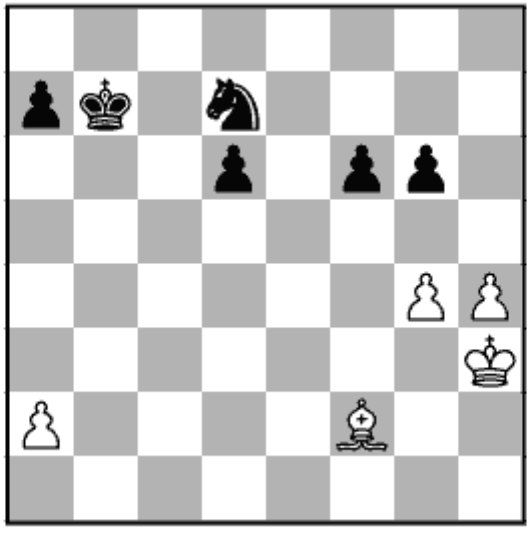
Puzzle 521: Black to play

answer



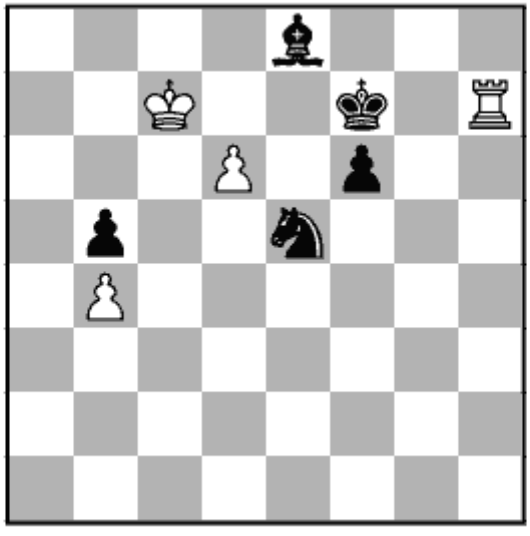
Puzzle 522: White to play

answer



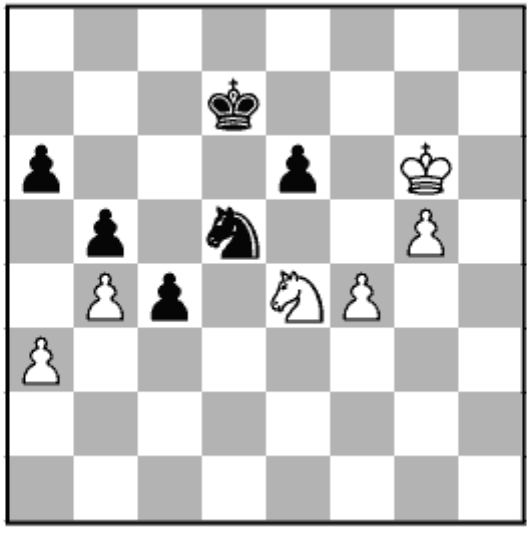
Puzzle 523: White to play

answer



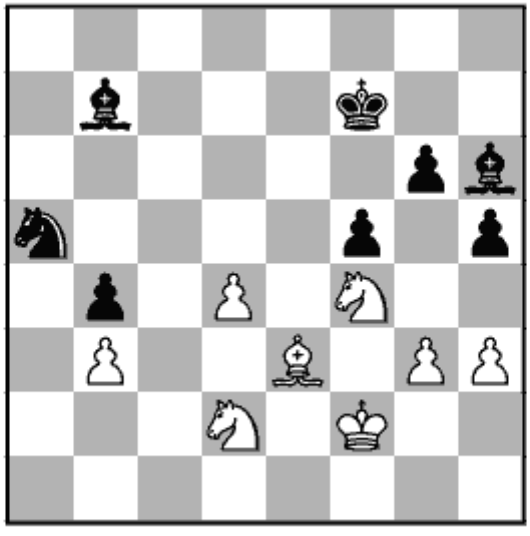
Puzzle 524: Black to play

answer



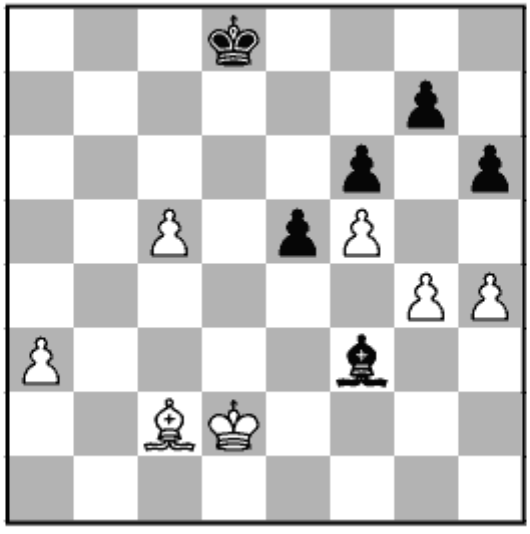
Puzzle 525: Black to play

answer



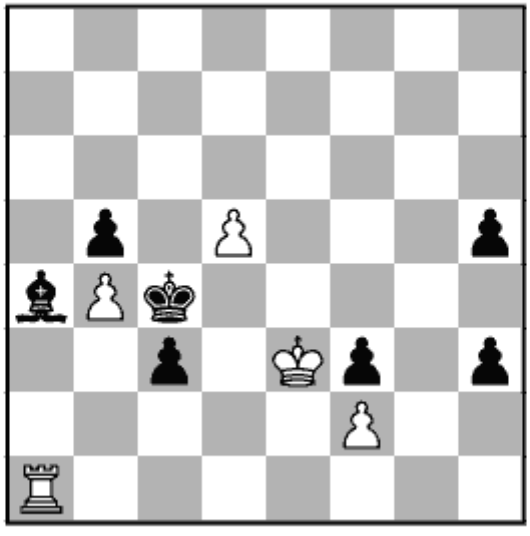
Puzzle 526: Black to play

answer



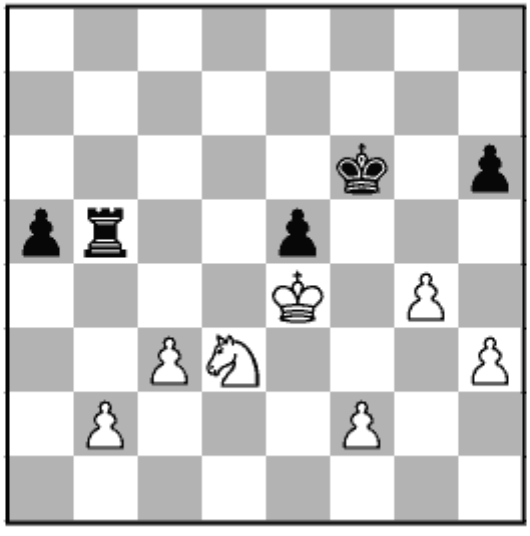
Puzzle 527: White to play

answer



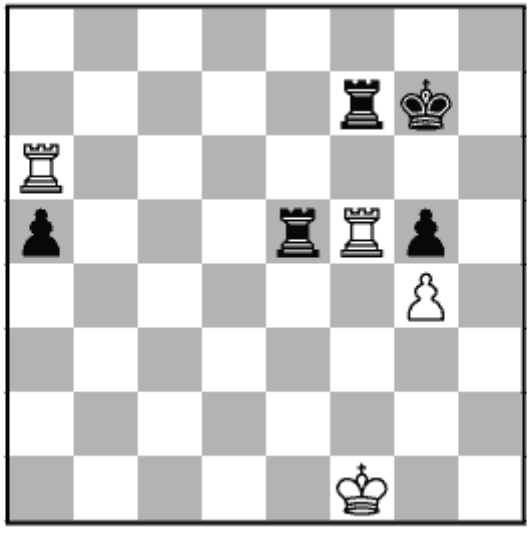
Puzzle 528: Black to play

answer



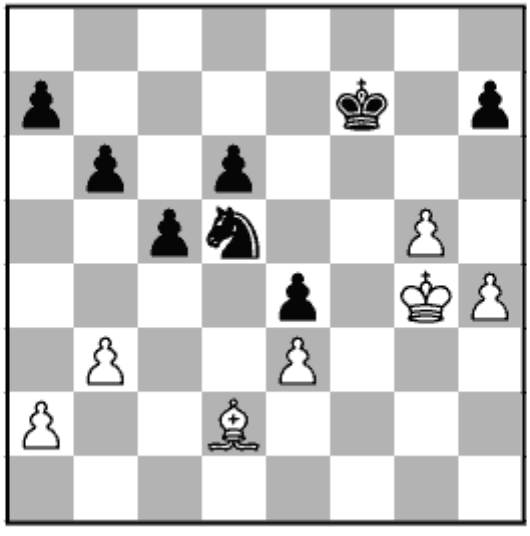
Puzzle 529: Black to play

answer



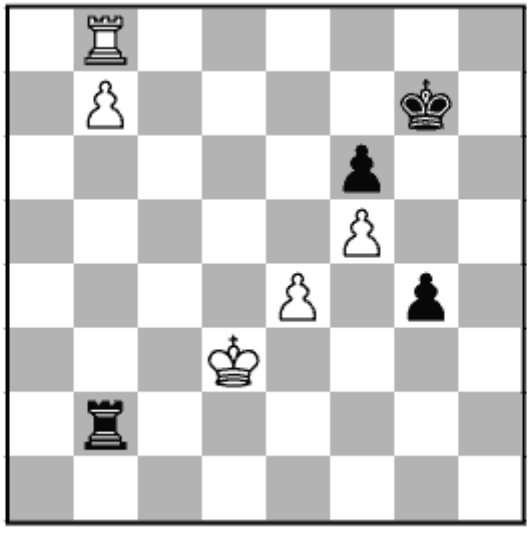
Puzzle 530: White to play

answer



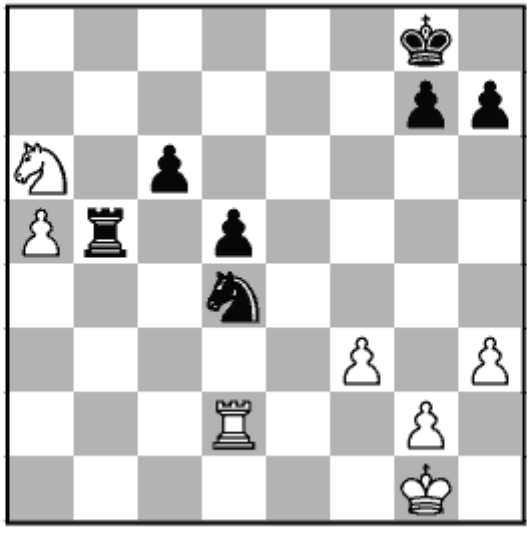
Puzzle 531: Black to play

answer



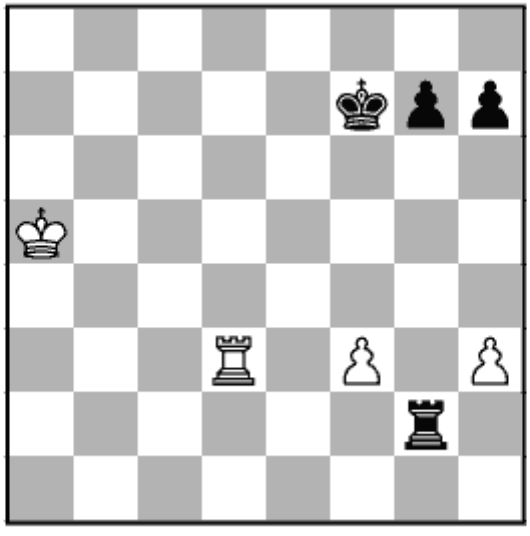
Puzzle 532: White to play

answer



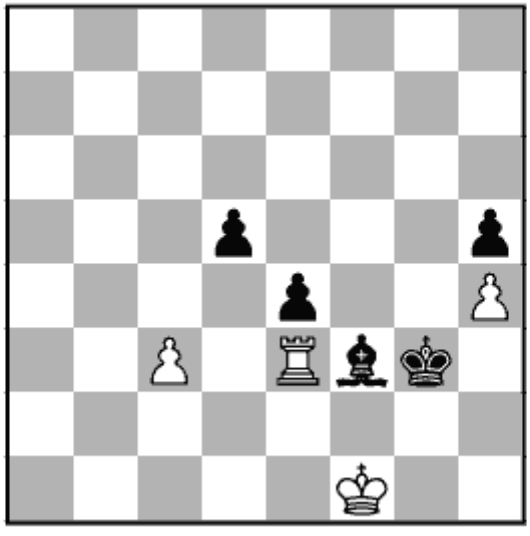
Puzzle 533: Black to play

answer



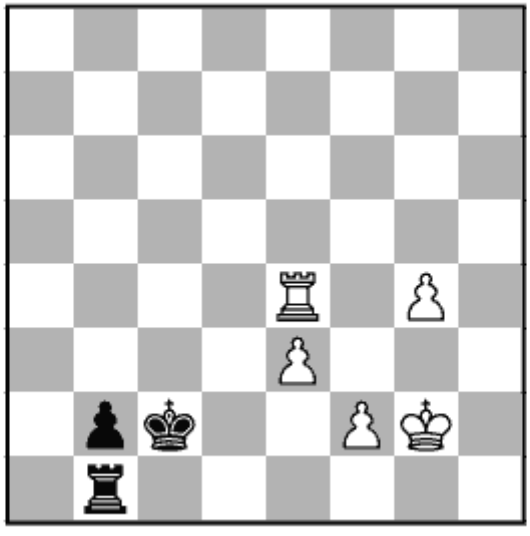
Puzzle 534: Black to play

answer



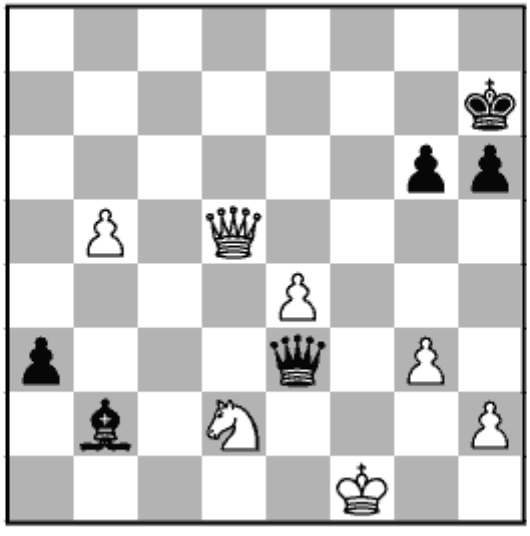
Puzzle 535: White to play

answer



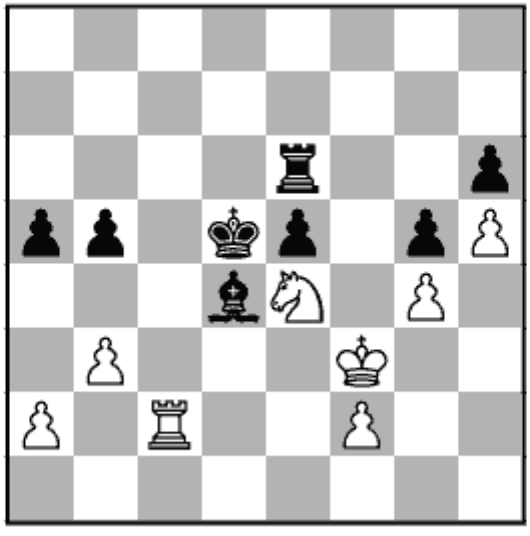
Puzzle 536: Black to play

answer



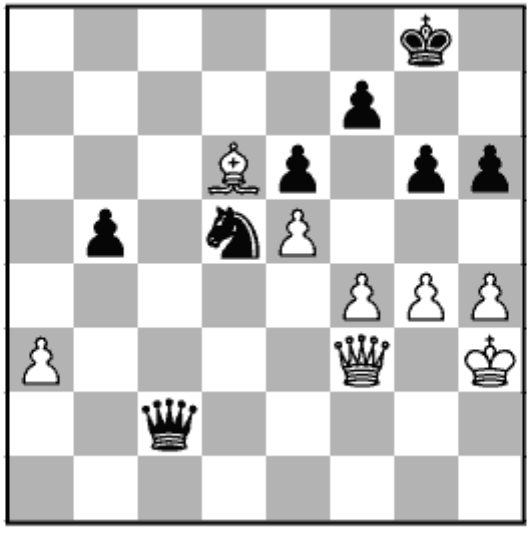
Puzzle 537: White to play

answer



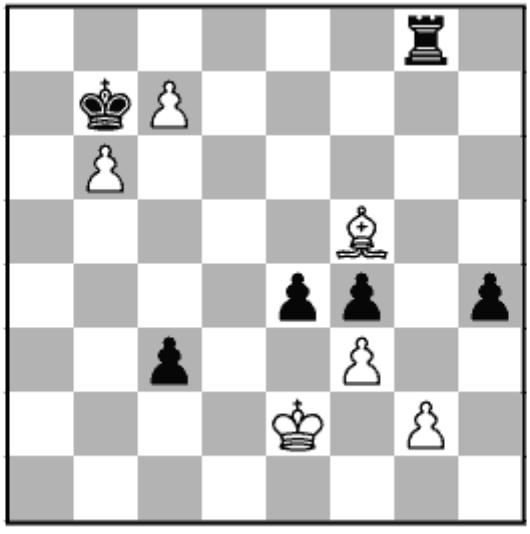
Puzzle 538: Black to play

answer



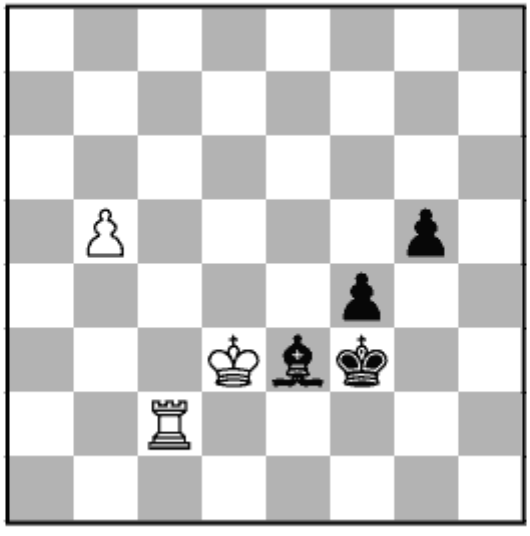
Puzzle 539: White to play

answer



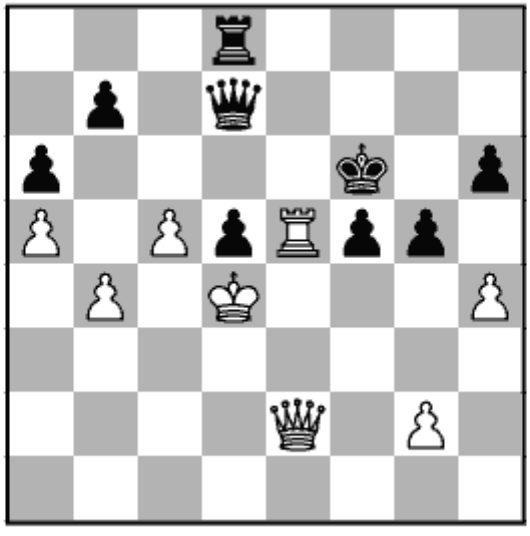
Puzzle 540: White to play

answer



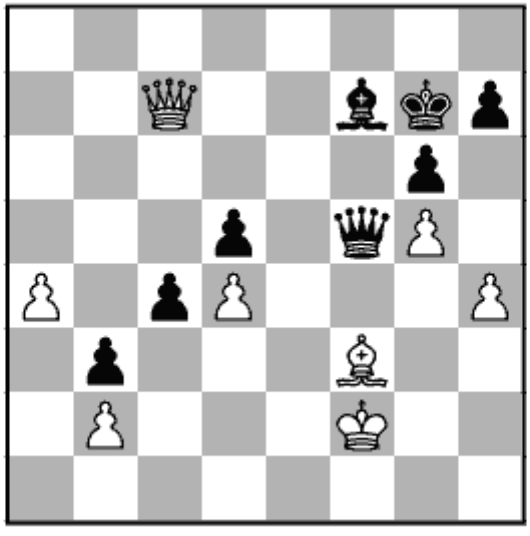
Puzzle 541: White to play

answer



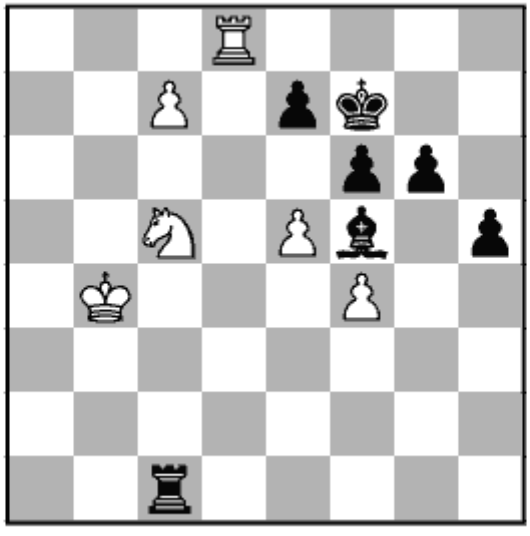
Puzzle 542: Black to play

answer



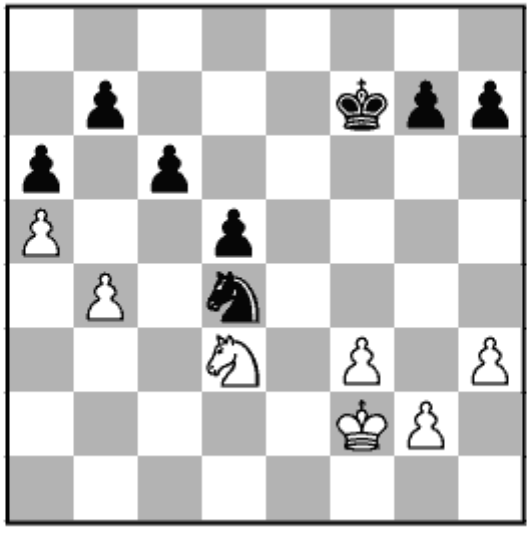
Puzzle 543: Black to play

answer



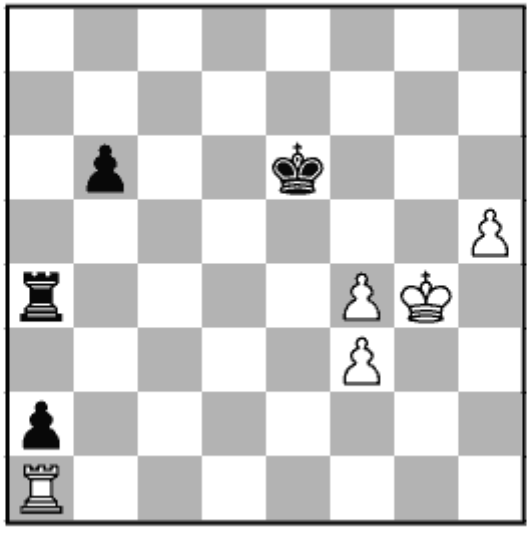
Puzzle 544: White to play

answer



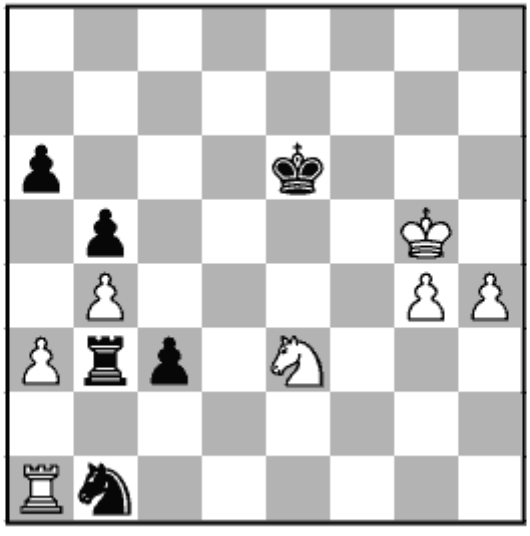
Puzzle 545: Black to play

answer



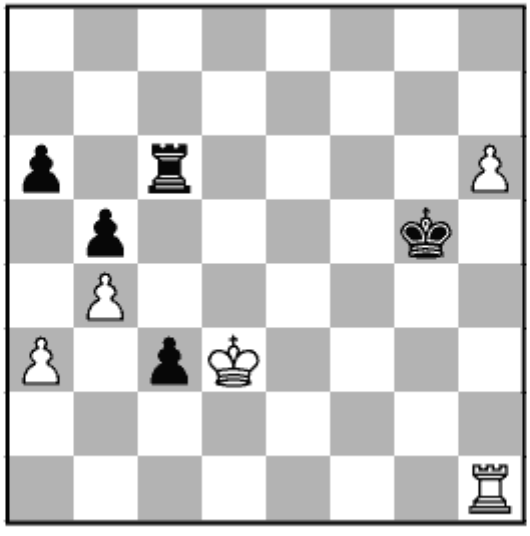
Puzzle 546: White to play

answer



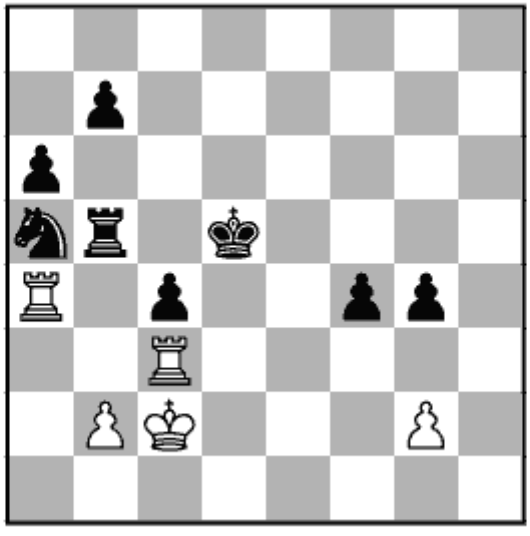
Puzzle 547: Black to play

answer



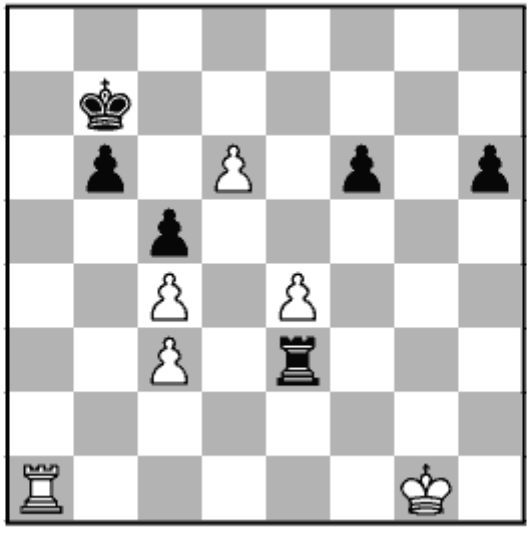
Puzzle 548: Black to play

answer



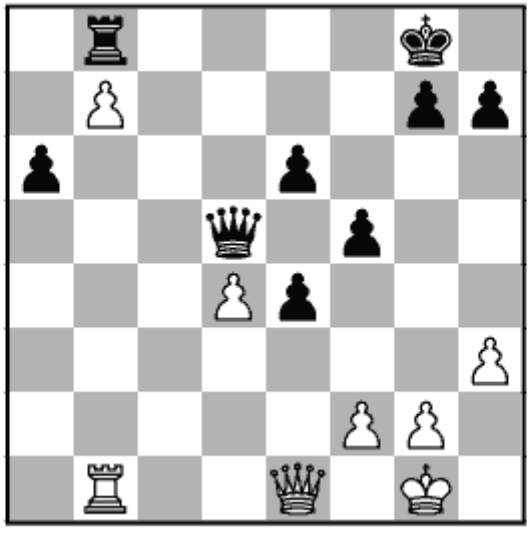
Puzzle 549: White to play

answer



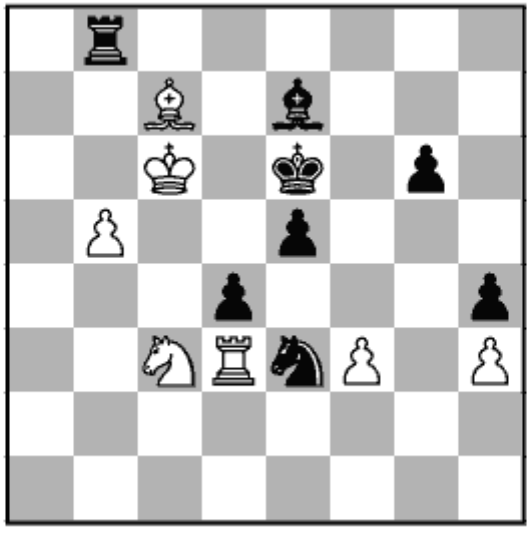
Puzzle 550: White to play

answer



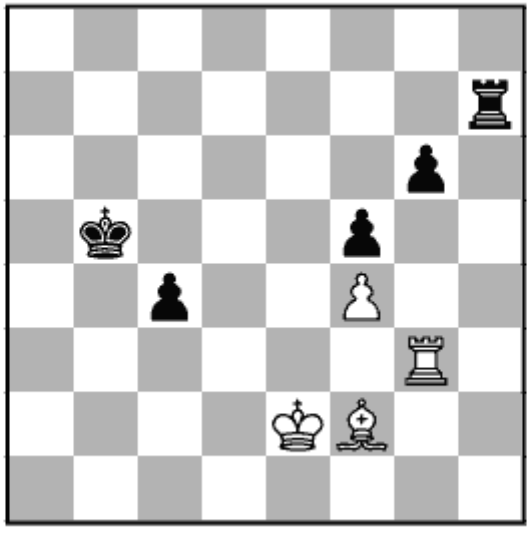
Puzzle 551: White to play

answer



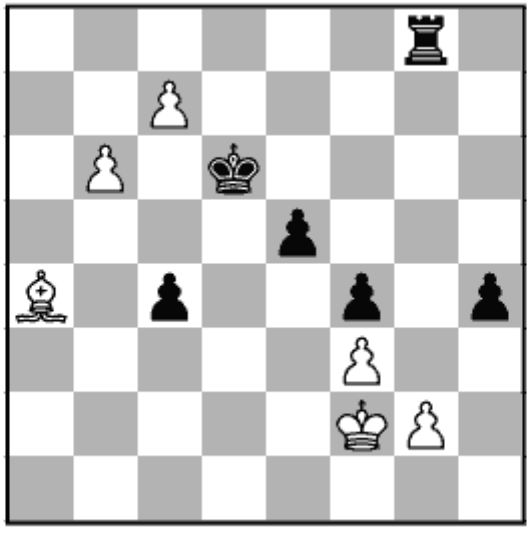
Puzzle 552: Black to play

answer



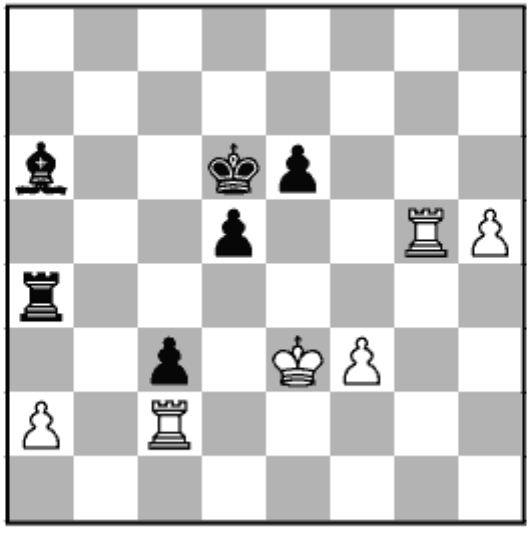
Puzzle 553: Black to play

answer



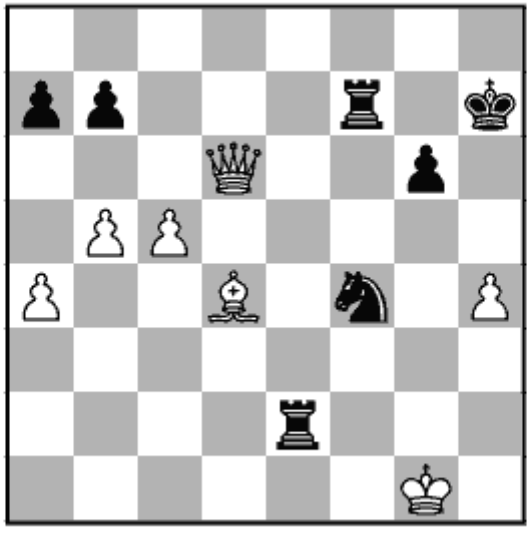
Puzzle 554: White to play

answer



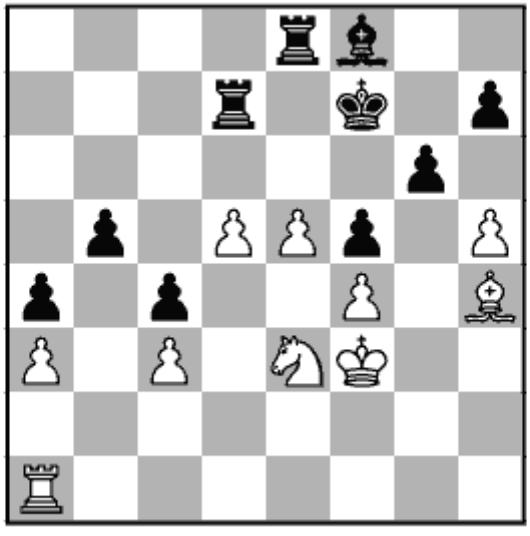
Puzzle 555: White to play

answer



Puzzle 556: White to play

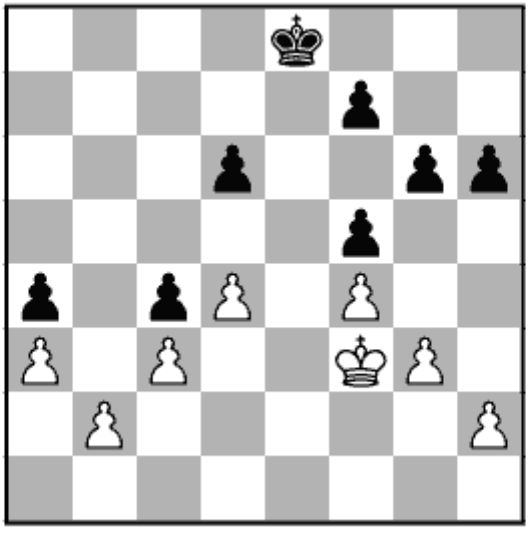
answer



Puzzle 557: Black to play

answer

Solutions for Chapter 10



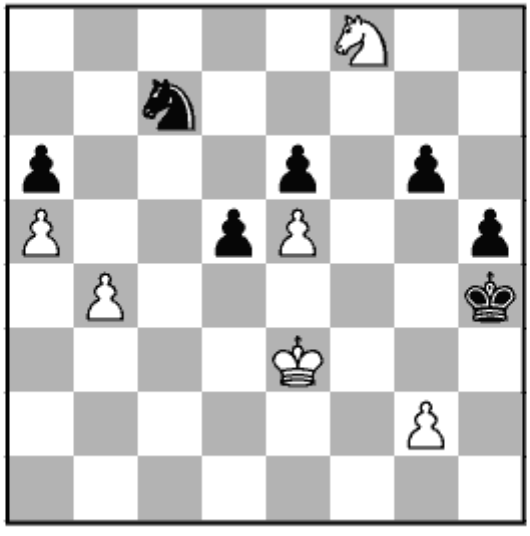
Solution 492: White to play

D.Fowler – M.Wilson

Hastings 2018/19

If White is to keep any winning chances, he needs to stop Black blocking the centre by playing 29…d5. So he must play **29 d5!** (29 Ke3? d5 =) **29…Kd7 30 Ke3 Kc7 31 Kd4 +–** with an easy win.

back



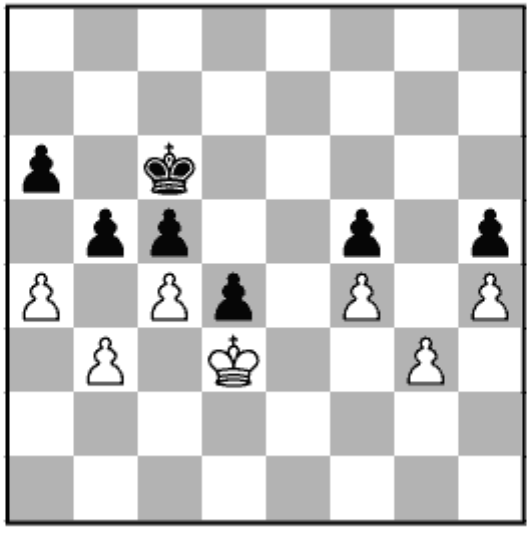
Solution 493: White to play

Willow – Gu In

Hastings 2018/19

With the black knight so far away and the black king awkwardly lodged on the edge of the board, White can launch a mating attack: **43 Kf4! g5+ 44 Kf3 1-0**. 44…g4+ 45 Kf4 d4 46 Ng6#.

back



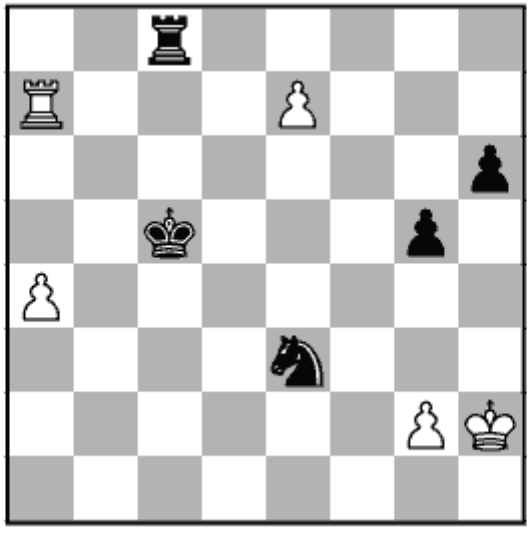
Solution 494: White to play

Kavinda – Banerjee

Mumbai 2018/19

Once you've realized White has no winning chances, the main thing is to keep the black king out. After **52 a5!** (not 52 axb5+? axb5 53 Ke2 Kb6 –+, when the king moves in to b4) the game was agreed drawn as not much can happen as long as Black keeps his king on the queenside; e.g., **52…Kd6 53 Kd2 Kc6** (53…Ke6?? 54 cxb5 +–) **54 Kd3 =**.

back



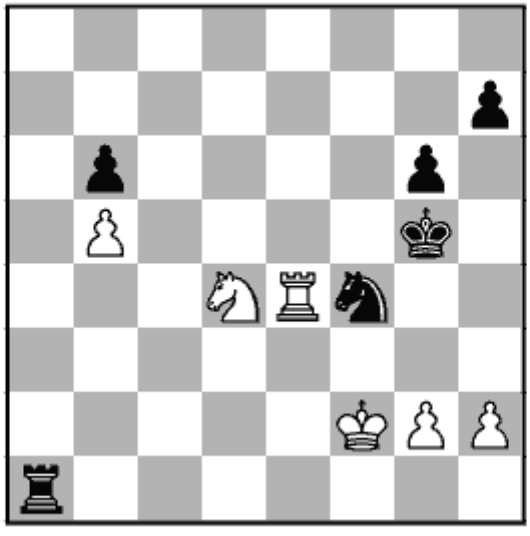
Solution 495: White to play

Chylewski – Tomczak (variation)

Krakow 2018/19

A sacrifice deflects the black rook, allowing the pawn to queen: **47 Rc7+! Rxc7 48 e8Q +–**.

back



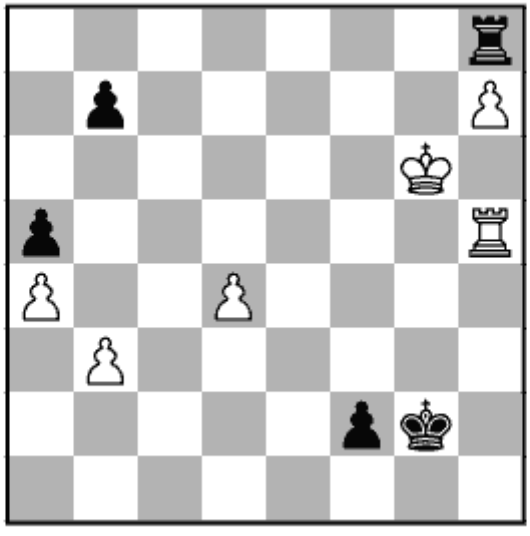
Solution 496: White to play

A.Katz – Le Quang (variation)

Burlingame 2019

The king is an unreliable defender of the other pieces, as at the slightest hint of trouble it must save its own skin: **59 h4+! Kg4 60 Ne2 +–**.

back



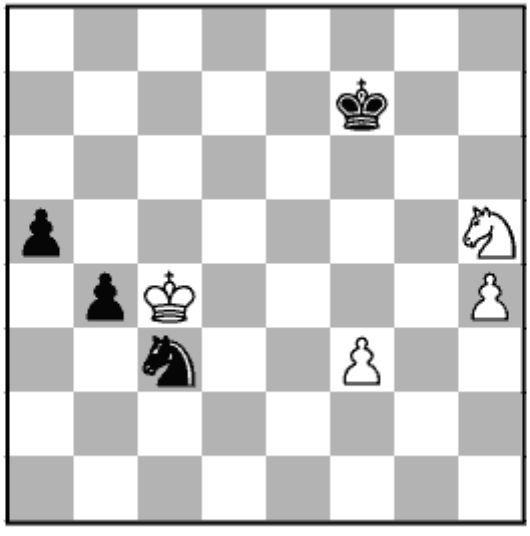
Solution 497: White to play

Santarius – Piasetski

Burlingame 2019

As often happens, the game is decided by a single tempo: **53 Rg5+! 1-0** (not 53 Rf5? Rd8! with a drawn position: 54 Kg7 Rd7+ 55 Kg6 Rd8 =) **53…Kh2 54 Rf5 Kg2 55 Kg7 +–**.

back



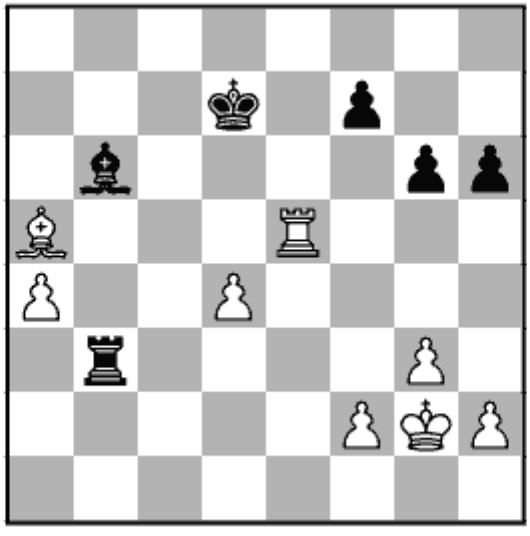
Solution 498: Black to play

Ampie – G.Free

Burlingame 2019

Black can trap the knight on h5 since the white king must hold back the queenside pawns: **46…Ne2! 47 Kd3** (47 Kb3 Kg6 –+) **47…b3 48 f4 Kg6 –+** and it's time for White to resign.

back



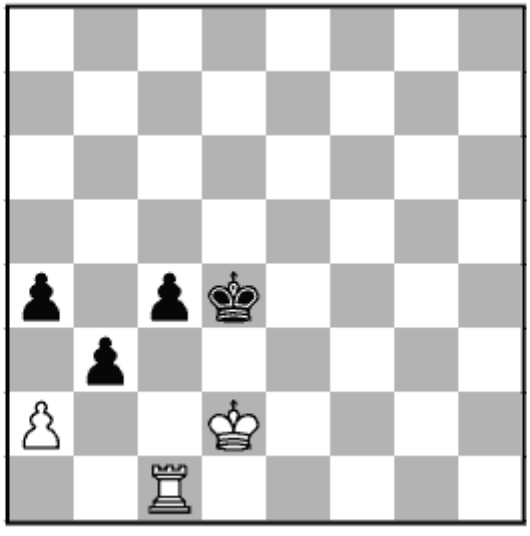
Solution 499: Black to play

Raahul – Nayem

Mumbai 2018/19

The a5-bishop is protected only by the rook on e5, and it can be driven away: **56…f6!** (only not 56…Bxd4? 57 Rd5+ +–) **57 Bxb6!?** (after the weaker 57 Rd5+?! Ke6 58 Bxb6 Kxd5 Black has chances to win) **57…fxe5 58 a5** and White should hold the draw without much difficulty.

back



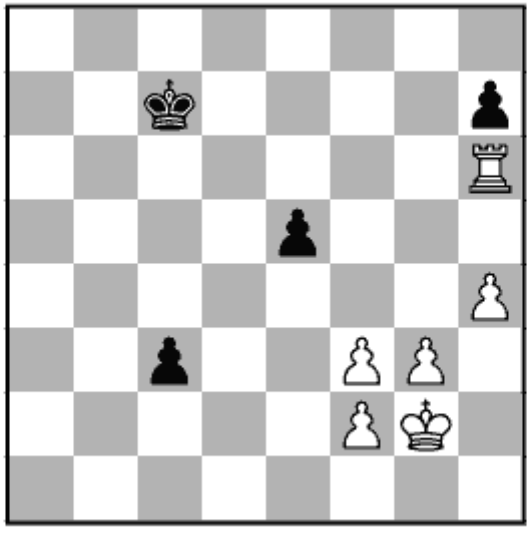
Solution 500: Black to play

Lyell – Leenhouts

Hastings 2018/19

Black mustn't allow the white king time to get in front of the pawns: **58…c3+!** (58…a3? 59 Rh1 c3+ 60 Kc1 +–) **59 Rxc3 b2 60 Rd3+** (60 Kc2 b1Q+ =) **60…Kc4 61 Rc3+ Kd4 ½-½** with a repetition of moves.

back



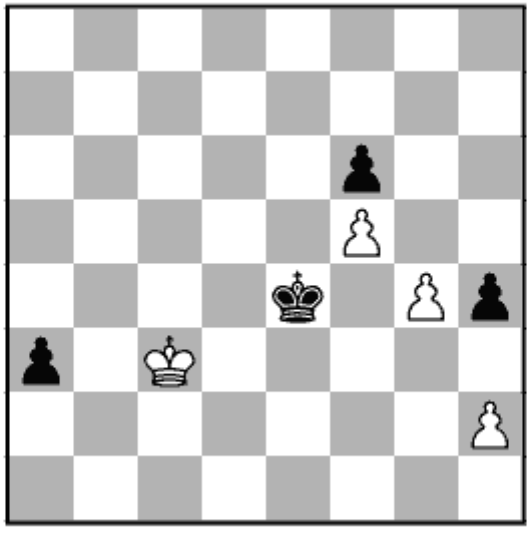
Solution 501: White to play

Das – Mohite

Mumbai 2018/19

Taking a pawn with check feels natural, but would throw away the win here: after 42 Rxh7+? Kb8 there's no way to stop the black c-pawn, and after 43 Rh6 Kb7 = it is a draw. But after **42 Ra6!** Black resigned in view of **42…c2 43 Ra1** +–.

back



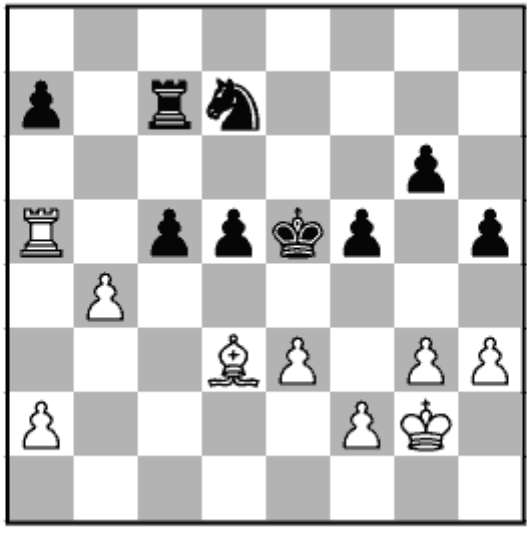
Solution 502: Black to play

Li Yihao – Wu Huanghui

Tianjin 2018/19

Black must dislocate White's h- and g-pawns so that the g4-pawn cannot be defended: **46…h3!** (after 46…Kf4? 47 h3 Kg3 48 g5 Black will have to play a little carefully just to make sure of the draw) **47 Kb3 Kf4 48 Kxa3 Kxg4 0-1**. After **49 Kb3 Kxf5** –+ it's an easy win.

back



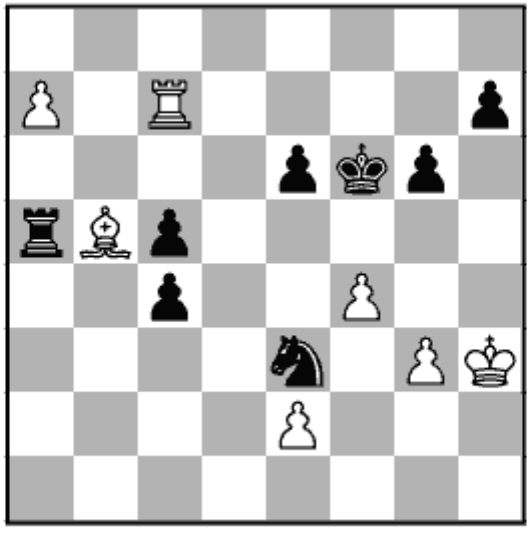
Solution 503: White to play

Mendonca – G.Lund

Stockholm 2018/19

In the endgame, mate is a rare but sometimes vital theme. **36 Ra6! d4** (36…Nb6 37 bxc5 Rxc5 38 Rxa7 +–) **37 Rxg6** (37 f4+ Kd5 38 Rxg6 is likely to transpose) **37…dxe3** (after 37…cxb4 both 38 exd4+ Kxd4 39 Bxf5 +– and 38 f4+!? Kd5 39 Rg7 Ke6 40 Rg5 +– are good) **38 f4+!** (after 38 fxe3?, as played in the game, 38…Nf6! gives Black enough counterplay to draw, though very accurate play is needed) **38…Kd5** (38…Kd4 39 Rd6+ Kc3 40 Bxf5 +–) **39 Bxf5 +–** and White wins. On 39…cxb4 there follows 40 Rg7.

back



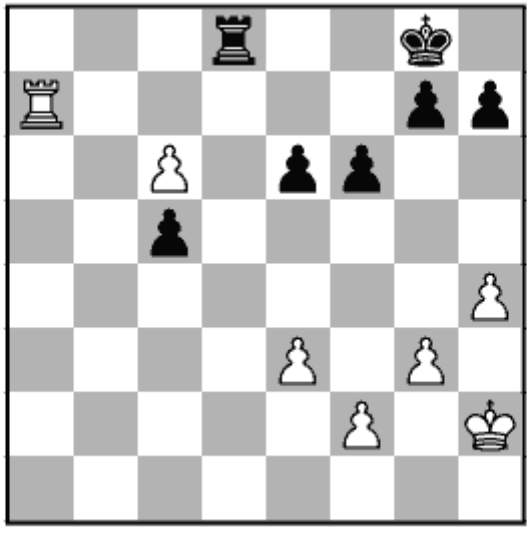
Solution 504: White to play

Comellas – D.Graham

Hastings 2018/19

White mustn't let Black put his knight on d5. **47 Be8!** (White forces the pace by threatening mate; instead 47 Bc6? allows 47…Nd5 48 Bxd5 {48 Rxh7? c3 –+} 48…exd5 49 Rxc5 Rxa7 50 e4 =) **47…e5 48 Bc6** (a little more complicated is 48 fxe5+!? Ke6 49 Bd7+! Kxe5 50 Rxc5+ Rxc5 51 a8Q +–) **48… c3 49 a8Q Rxa8 50 Bxa8 c4 51 Be4 +–**. White can safely give up his bishop for the two c-pawns, leading to an easily winning endgame.

back



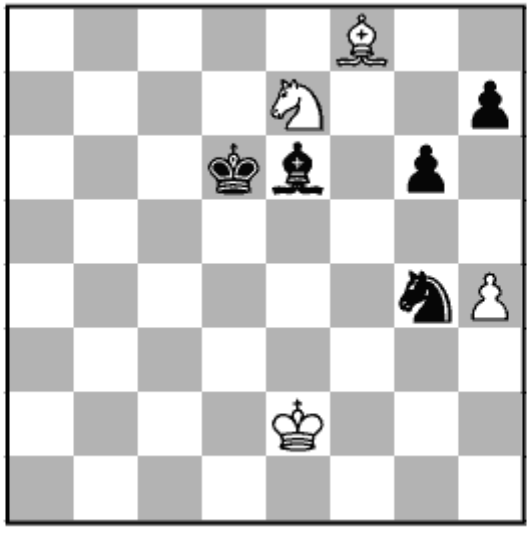
Solution 505: White to play

Khusenkhojaev – Bhambure

Mumbai 2018/19

White needs to make sure the black king is confined to the back rank before advancing his c-pawn. **43 Rd7!** (43 c7? Rc8 and the pawn won't promote due to 44 Rb7?! Kf7 =+, when White must even be a little careful) **43…Rc8** (the game ended 43…Re8 44 c7 1-0) **44 c7** +–. There is no defence against the check on d8.

back



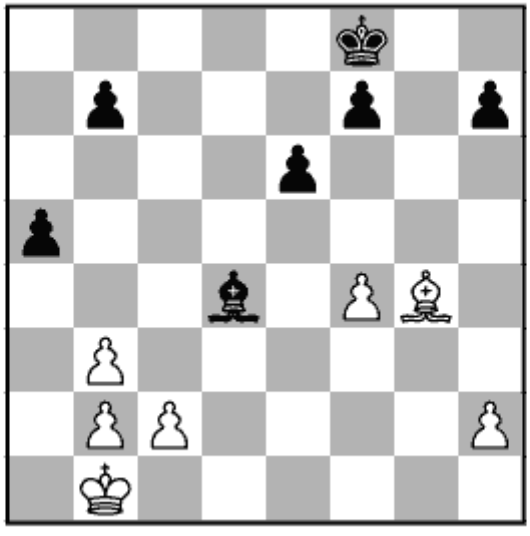
Solution 506: Black to play

Daggupati – Abrahamyan (variation)

Burlingame 2019

After **47…Kd7!** White's pieces are paralysed, and he will have to give up his knight: **48 Kf3 Ke8 49 Nxg6 hxg6 –+**.

back



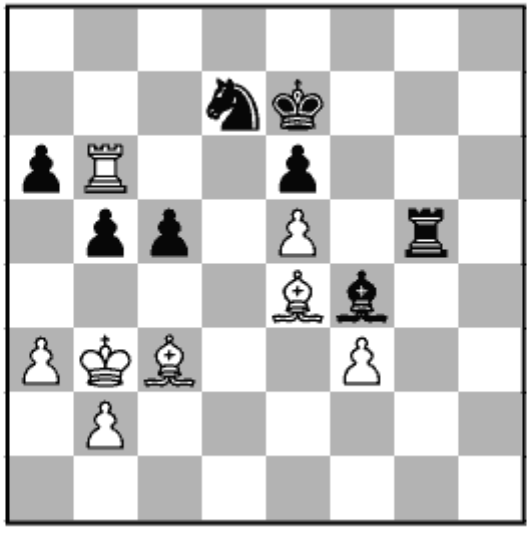
Solution 507: Black to play

Subrota – Arya

Mumbai 2018/19

It is vital to fix the pawn on f4, where it will be defenceless: **29…f5! 30 Bf3 b6** with a decisive advantage; e.g., **31 Ka2 Be3 –+**.

back



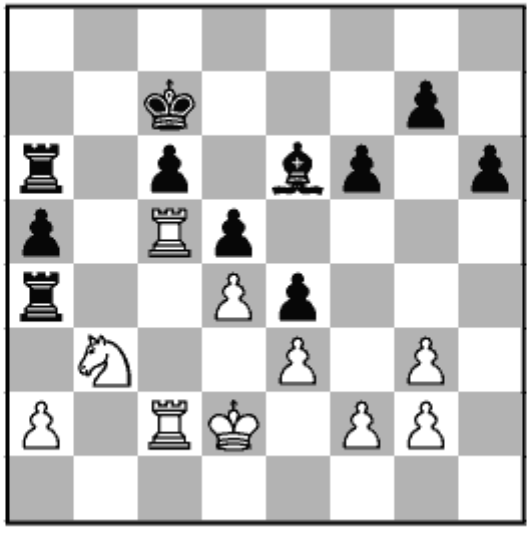
Solution 508: White to play

Czebe – K.Trisha

Mumbai 2018/19

After **39 Rb7!** Black can't save his pinned knight because his pieces are too awkwardly placed to defend it: **39…Ke8** (or: 39…Kd8 40 Ba5+ Kc8 41 Rc7+ +–; after 39…Bxe5 White needs to insert 40 Bxe5! Rxe5 before winning material with 41 Bc6 +–) **40 Bc6 Rg7** (40…c4+ 41 Kb4 +– was played in the game) **41 Rb8+ Ke7 42 Bxd7** with an extra piece. On **42… Kxd7** there follows **43 Rb7+ +–**.

back



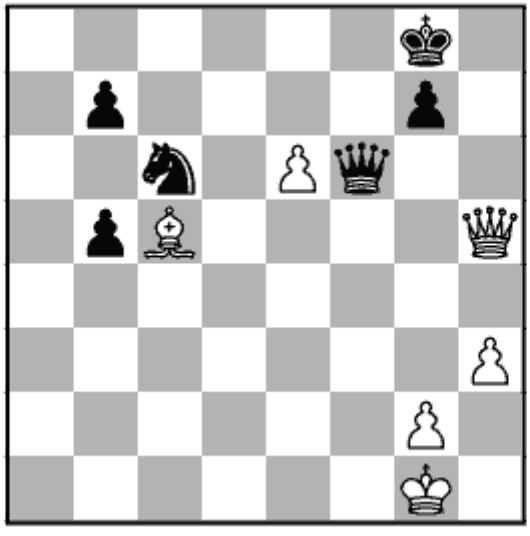
Solution 509: White to play

Lugovskoi – Harshavardhan (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

28 R5c3! (with the deadly threat of 29 Nc5) **28…Rc4 29 Rxc4** (or 29 Nc5 +–) **29…dxc4 30 Nc5 +–** and Black can resign.

back



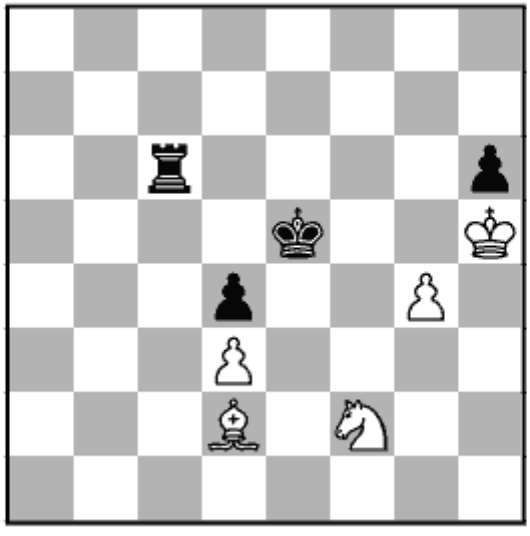
Solution 510: White to play

Kravtsiv – Mooketsi

Kazan tt 2013

There's only one path to victory: **37 e7!** (37 Qd5? throws away the win due to 37…Qe5 =, while after 37 Qe8+ Kh7 White must retrace his steps with 38 Qh5+ Kg8 since 38 e7? is met by 38…Qa1+) **37…Nxe7 38 Qe8+ Kh7 39 Qxe7 +–** with an easy win.

back



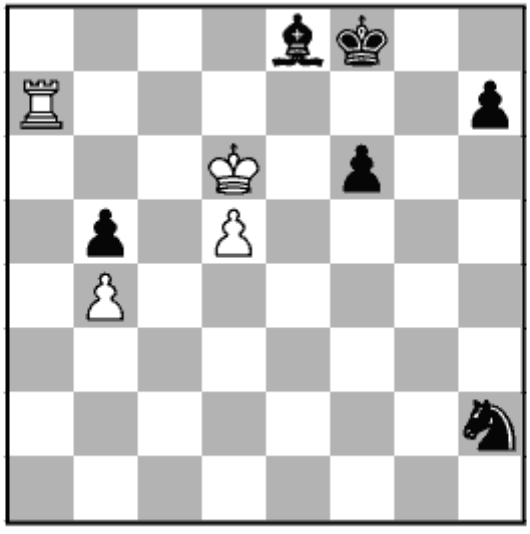
Solution 511: Black to play

Yu Zhuoming – Li Kam

Tianjin 2018/19

There's no way to save the h6-pawn, so Black must create counterplay: **48…Rf6!** (not 48…Rc2? 49 Ne4 +–, when Black can't attack the d3-pawn quickly enough) **49 Be1** (the game ended 49 Ne4 Rf3 ½-½ – the d3-pawn will fall) **49…Rf3** (this is simplest, although 49…Kd5 also leads to a draw) **50 Kxh6 Re3 51 Ba5 Rf3 52 Be1** (no better is 52 Ne4 Rxd3) **52…Re3** with a repetition of moves.

back



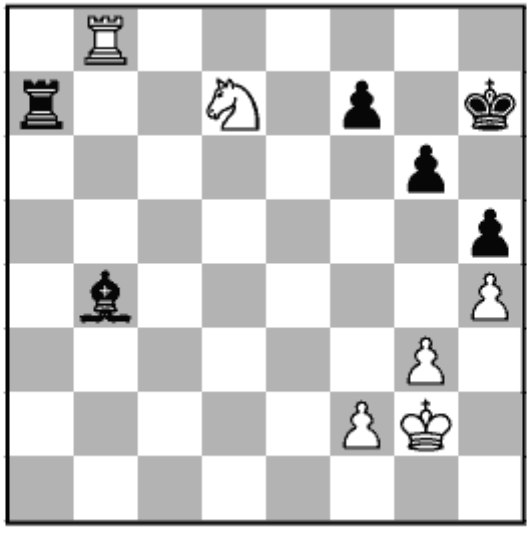
Solution 512: White to play

S.White – Faulks

Hastings 2018/19

49 Ke6! (taking the h7-pawn is bad because it gives the black knight time to return to the defence: 49 Rxh7? Nf3 and now White won't be able to put his king on e6: 50 Ke6?? Ng5+ –+, 50 Ra7 Ng5 = or 50 Rh8+ Kf7 51 Rh7+ Kf8 52 Kc7 Ne5 =, as played in the game) **49…h5** (or: 49…Nf3 50 Kxf6 +–; 49…Ng4 50 Rxh7 Kg8 51 Rc7 +– shows that g4 is not a good square for the knight) **50 d6 Ng4 51 Rh7!?** (this is even more effective than 51 d7 Bxd7+ 52 Rxd7 +–) **51…Kg8** (51…Bc6 52 Rf7+ Kg8 53 d7 +–) **52 d7 Bxd7+ 53 Rxd7 +–** with an easy win.

back



Solution 513: White to play

Saurabh – Sundararajan

Mumbai 2018/19

White wins thanks to a few checks: **40 Nf6+ Kg7** (40…Kh6 41 Rxb4 +–) **41 Ne8+!** (41 Nxh5+? gxh5 42 Rxb4 is insufficient for victory) **41…Kf8 42 Nd6+! Ke7 43 Nc8+ 1-0**.

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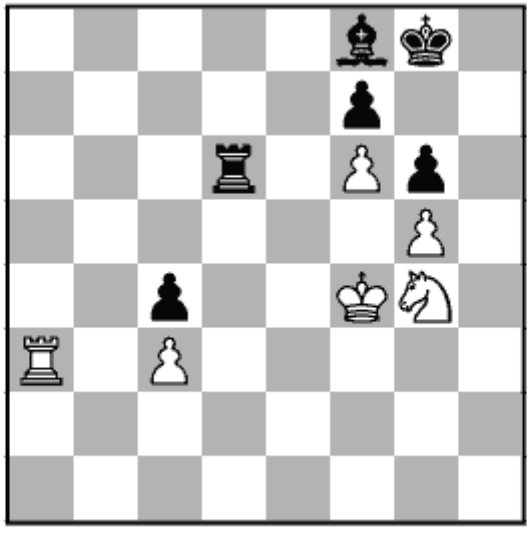


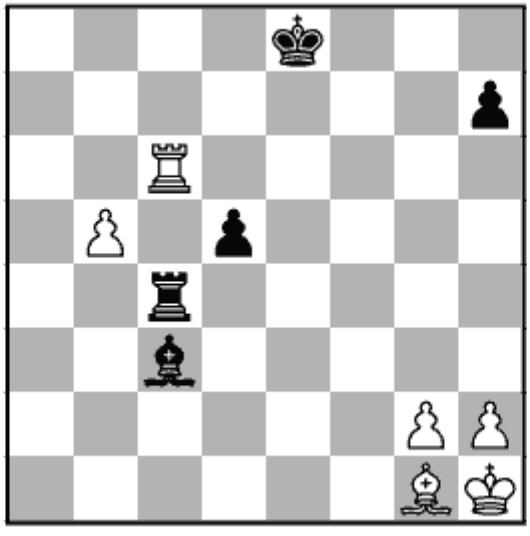
Solution 514: Black to play

Naroditsky – A.Hong (variation)

Burlingame 2019

We need to assess the position correctly. Black must force an exchange of rooks, since otherwise he will be doomed by his bad king: **47…Rd4+!** (47…Rd8? 48 Ra7 Rd5 49 Ra8 +–) **48 cxd4 Bxa3 49 Ne3 Bc1 50 Ke4 Kf8** with an equal ending.

back



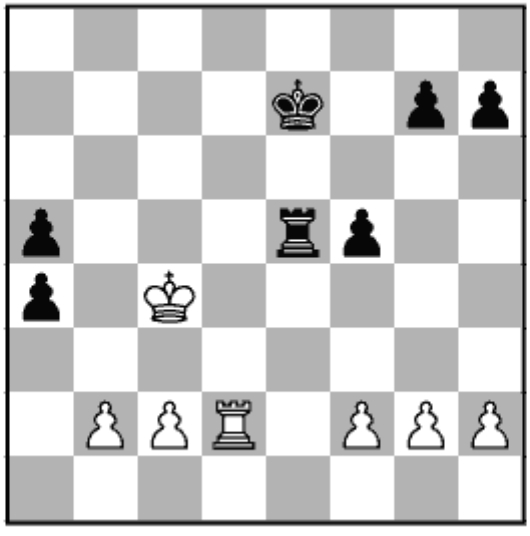
Solution 515: White to play

N.Kumar – Y.Liou

Burlingame 2019

49 Rc5! (since Black can't defend his d5-pawn, he will be forced to exchange on c5, but this will lead to a hopeless bishop ending; not 49 Rxc4? dxc4, when White has lost control of Black's passed pawn: 50 Be3 Bb2 51 g3 c3 52 Bd4 Ba1 =) **49…Ba5** (or 49…Rxc5 50 Bxc5 and now 50…Kd7 51 g3 d4 52 Kg2 +– or 50…d4 51 Kg1 d3 52 Kf2 +–) **50 g3!** (White solves the problem of his weak back rank, removing Black's last hope; weaker is 50 Rxd5?! Rc1 51 Rd6 Rb1 +/–) **50…Rxc5** (50…Ke7 51 Rxd5 +–) **51 Bxc5 +–** with a decisive advantage.

back



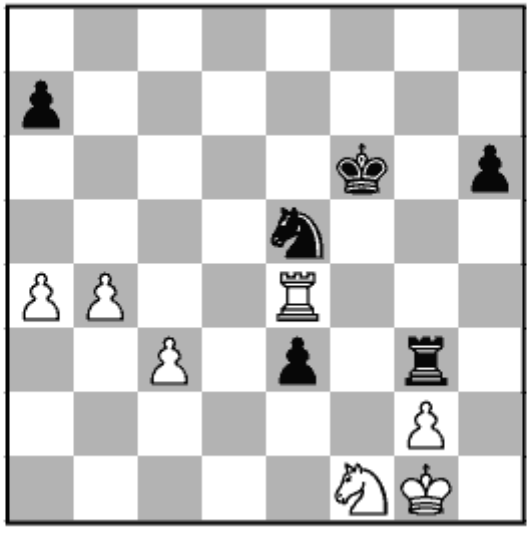
Solution 516: White to play

V.Karthik – Daggupati

Burlingame 2019

To make progress, White needs to drive the black rook from the 5th rank: **31 f4!** (not 31 Rd5? Re2 =) **31…Re4+ 32 Kb5 Rxf4** (the game featured 32…Rb4+ 33 Kxa5 Rxb2 {33…Rxf4 34 Kb5 +–} 34 Kxa4 +–) **33 c4!** (33 Kxa5?! Rh4 gives Black chances to escape; e.g., 34 h3 g5 35 Kb5 f4 36 c4 f3!) **33…g5 34 c5** +– with a decisive advantage.

back



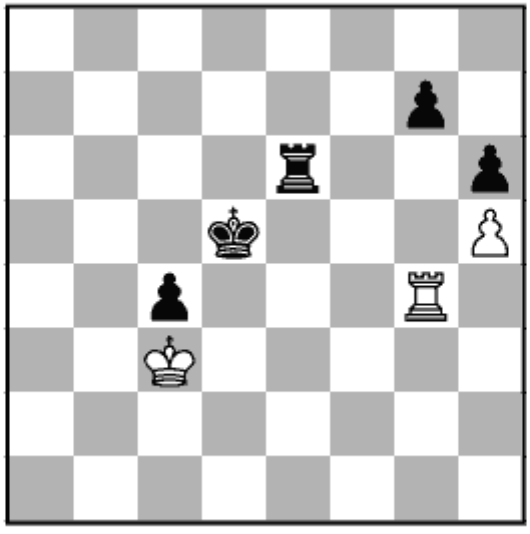
Solution 517: Black to play

Wang Zijian – Gu Tianlu (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

Black's only hope is to find some tactic to unleash his passed pawn: **36…Nf3+! 37 Kh1 Rg4! 38 Rxg4** (38 gxf3? Rxe4 39 fxe4 e2 –+) **38…e2** (now Black will get a queen, and the position becomes unclear) **39 Rf4+ Kg6 40 Rxf3 e1Q** and the ending is objectively drawn, as White clearly has a fortress if he wants, but can hardly hope to make any kind of progress.

back



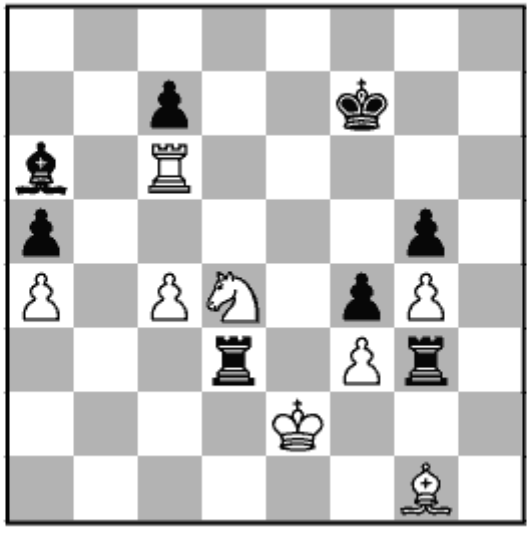
Solution 518: White to play

Narciso Dublan – Kravtsiv

Madrid 2012

White must drive the black king away from the pawn, since he must avoid an exchange of rooks. **66 Rd4+!** (not 66 Rxc4? Re3+ 67 Kd2 Kxc4 –+, while after 66 Rxg7? Re3+ White can't be saved: 67 Kc2 Rh3 68 Ra7 Kd4 –+ or 67 Kb4 Rb3+ 68 Ka4 {as played in the game} 68…Rb1 –+) **66…Ke5 67 Rxc4** and despite the white king being so far away, Black cannot win the h5-pawn: **67…Kf5** (67…Kf6 68 Rf4+ Kg5 69 Rf7 =) **68 Kd3 Kg5** (or 68…Re7 69 Rh4) **69 Rc7** with a drawn position.

back



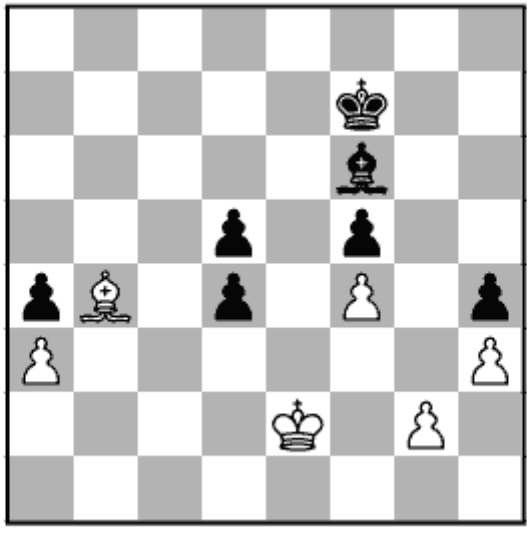
Solution 519: Black to play

Eggleston – Lyrberg

Stockholm 2018/19

The choice comes down to two rook moves. 39…Ra3? is wrong because after 40 Bf2 Ra2+ 41 Kf1 White is doing fine. For example: 41…Ra1+ 42 Ke2 Rg2 (or 42…Rh3 43 Rxa6 Ra2+ 44 Kf1 Rh2 45 Ne2!, with unclear play) 43 Rxa6 Ra2+ (43…c5 {played in the game} 44 Nb3 Ra2+ 45 Nd2 =) 44 Kd3 Rgxf2 45 Rxa5 with enough compensation for the exchange. The correct option is **39…Rc3! 40 Bf2** (40 Rxc7+ Ke8 41 Bf2 Rh3 –+) **40…Bxc4+ 41 Kd2 Rd3+ 42 Ke1** (no better is 42 Kc2 Rg2 43 Rxc4 Re3 44 Rxc7+ Kf6 –+) and now **42…Bd5!** is the only move leading to victory: **43 Rxc7+ Kf6 44 Bxg3 fxg3 45 Ne2 Rxf3 –+** is an easy win.

back



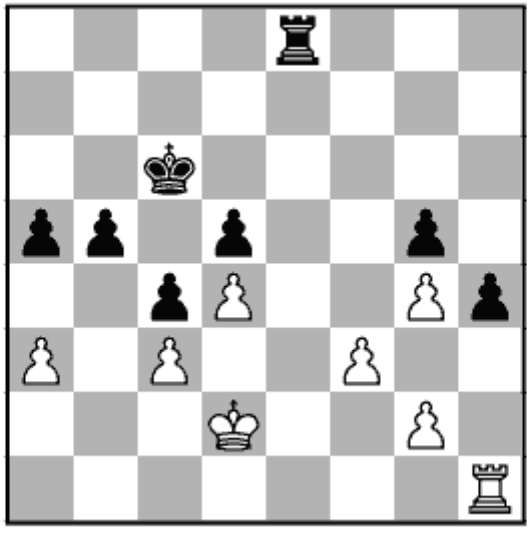
Solution 520: White to play

Liu Guanchu – Ganguly (variation)

Tianjin 2018/19

Psychologically it is not so easy to retreat the bishop from its active posting to a passive one, but this is what is needed if White is to hold on. After **43 Bd2!** (43 Kd3? Be7 44 Bxe7 Kxe7 45 Kxd4 Kd6 –+ is a hopeless pawn ending for White, while after 43 Bc5? Be7 44 Bxd4 Bxa3 –+ there is no holding back the two passed pawns) **43…Be7 44 Bc1** the black bishop cannot achieve anything on its own, while the black king can be held at bay by its white counterpart. **44…Ke6 45 Kd3 Bc5 46 Kc2** and White defends comfortably.

back



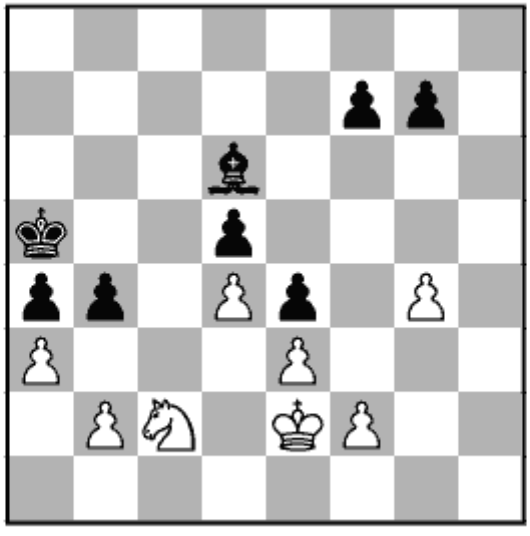
Solution 521: Black to play

Sun Jihan – D.Wu

Tianjin 2018/19

In rook endings, it is often worth giving up a pawn or more to activate the rook: **40…b4!** (not 40…Ra8? 41 Ra1 =+) **41 axb4 axb4 42 cxb4 Ra8!** (but not 42…Kb5?, as played in the game, due to 43 Ra1! Kxb4 44 Rb1+ with an equal position) **43 Re1 Kb5** with a decisive advantage. There could follow **44 Re5 Kxb4 45 Rxd5 Ra2+ 46 Ke3 c3** (46…Rxg2!? –+) **47 Rxg5 Rxg2 –+**.

back



Solution 522: White to play

D.Wu – Wang Zijian

Tianjin 2018/19

White mustn't allow the black pawn to reach b3, so he has to take on b4.

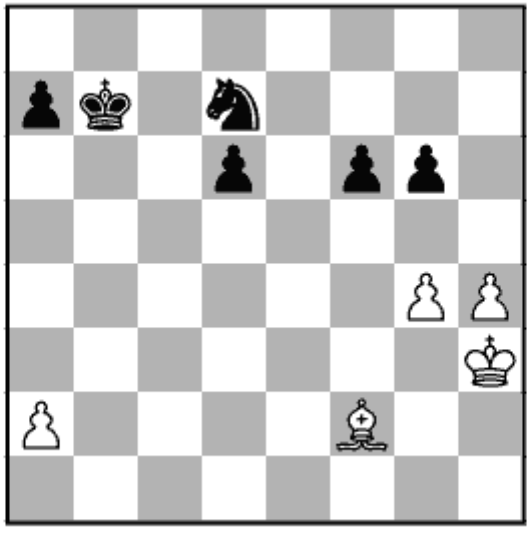
35 Nxb4!

This is the correct way to do so, as the pawn ending is tenable. After 35 axb4+? Kb5! 36 Kd2 Kc4 the passive knight on c2 dooms White: 37 Kc1 Be7 38 Kd2 Bh4 –+. 35 f3?, as played in the game, is also bad: 35…exf3+ 36 Kxf3 b3 37 Ne1 Bxa3 –+.

35…Bxb4 36 axb4+ Kxb4 37 Kd2 Kb3 38 Kc1

with an equal endgame.

back



Solution 523: White to play

Peng Hongchi – Yu Lei

Tianjin 2018/19

With the a-pawn the 'wrong' rook's pawn for the white bishop, Black can hope to draw by eliminating the g- and h-pawns. It turns out that to avoid that happening, White must target the f6-pawn before pushing his h-pawn.

43 Bd4!

The problem with 43 h5? (as played in the game) is 43…Nf8 44 Bd4 f5!, which leads to a drawn position: 45 g5 gxh5 46 Kh4 a6 47 Kxh5 Kc6 48 g6 Nxg6! =.

43…a6

The most stubborn. After 43…a5 White will continue in the same way, with the sole difference that the pawn will come under attack on a5. After 43…Kc6 44 Bxa7 +– White now has two passed pawns, while 43…f5 44 gxf5 gxf5 45 h5 is an easier win for White than the main line: 45…Nf8 (45…Kc6 46 Bg7 +–) 46 Kg3 Kc6 47 Bg7 Nh7 48 Kf4 +–.

44 h5 Nf8

Or 44…gxh5 45 gxh5 Kc6 46 h6 Nf8 47 Kg4! Kd5 48 Bxf6 Ke6 49 Bg7 Nh7 50 Kf4 +–.

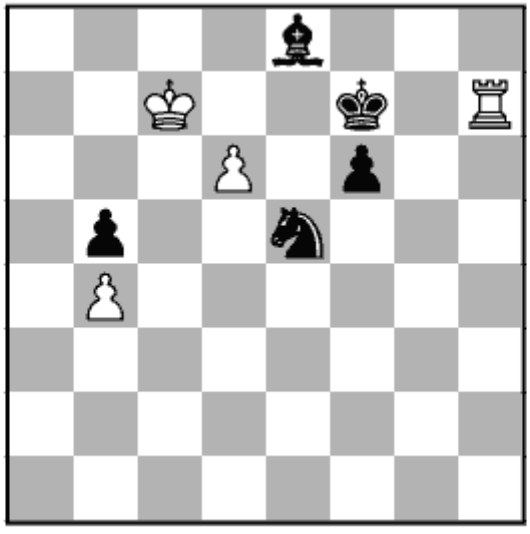
45 Bxf6 Kc6 46 Kg3 Kd5

46…Kd7 47 Kf4 +–.

47 Kf4

Now Black loses because he cannot give up his knight for the h-pawn. For example, after **47…Ne6+ 48 Ke3 Nf8 49 Bc3 +–** Black is in zugzwang. He will have to let the white king advance, after which his position will be hopeless.

back



Solution 524: Black to play

S.White – Faulks

Hastings 2018/19

The key to this ending is that the position with the black king on f8 and the white rook on e7 is reciprocal zugzwang. With White to play it's a draw; with Black to move, White wins. Therefore:

58…Kg8!

Not 58…Kf8? (played in the game) 59 Re7 Nf7 (59…Nd3 60 Rxe8+ Kxe8 61 d7+ +–) 60 Re6 f5 61 Rf6 +– with an easy win.

59 Re7

59 Rh2 Kg7 =.

59…Kf8

White can't improve his position: **60 Re6 Kf7 61 Re7+ Kf8 =**.

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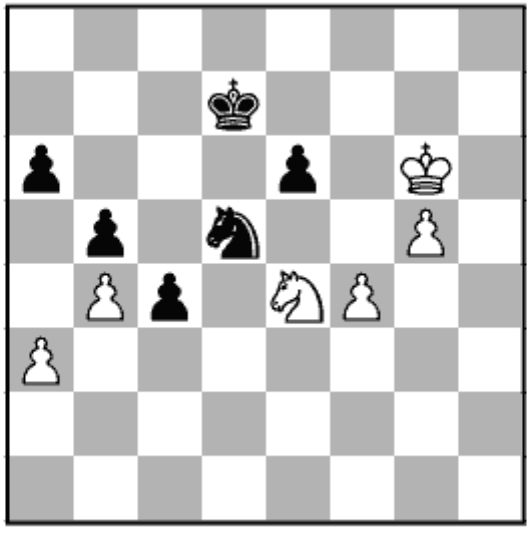

Solution 525: Black to play

A.Aleksandrov – Rishi

Mumbai 2018/19

Before advancing the c-pawn, Black needs to push the white king further into the corner.

55…Ke7!

55…Nxf4+? 56 Kf7 Kc6 57 Nc3!? Kd6 58 Kf6! = occurred in the game, while after 55…c3? 56 Nxc3 Nxc3 57 Kf7, thanks to his fast-moving passed g-pawn, White is no worse.

56 Kh6

After 56 f5 Nf4+ 57 Kh6 exf5 –+ Black can even give up his knight for the g-pawn, as the white knight won't be able to cope with two passed pawns.

56…c3 57 g6

57 Nxc3 Nxc3 58 g6 Nd5 –+.

57…c2 58 g7 c1Q 59 g8Q Qh1+ –+

Black wins a knight and the game.

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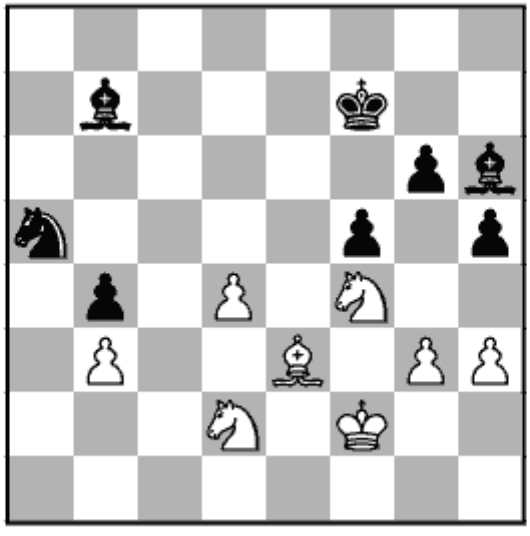


Solution 526: Black to play

R.Shah – Rebut

Mumbai 2018/19

Black can exploit the fact that the e3-bishop is completely blocked in.

47…g5! 48 Ne2

Clearly White must move the knight (even though in the game he didn't!). The other options:

a) 48 Nxh5 Kg6 49 g4 f4 –+.

b) After 48 Nd3 h4 49 d5! (49 gxh4 f4 –+) 49…hxg3+ 50 Kxg3 Black can win, but this is another of our exercises – see Puzzle 344.

48…Bd5!

Not letting White open up any lines for the bishop. 48…h4? fails due to 49 d5 hxg3+ 50 Nxg3 f4 51 Bb6! =.

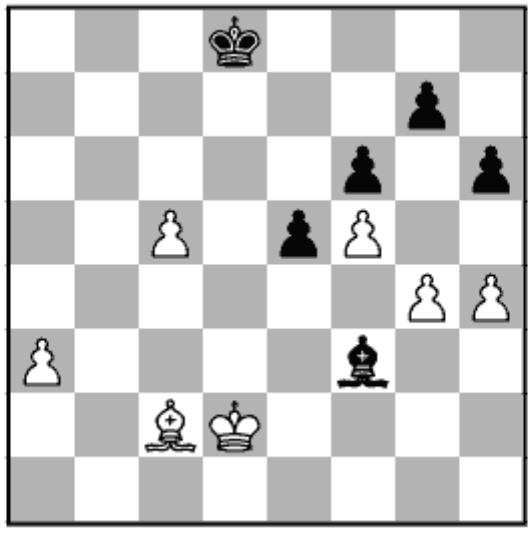
49 h4

49 Nc1 f4 –+.

49…f4 50 gxf4 gxh4 –+

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 527: White to play

Ruiz Castillo – T.Coleman

Burlingame 2019

The key point is that White cannot offer an exchange of bishops on d1 right now, as this would allow the black king to pick up the c5-pawn, resulting in a drawn pawn ending.

57 Ke3!

Not:

a) 57 a4? Kc7 58 Ke3 Bd5 59 a5 (59 Be4 Bxe4 =) 59…Kc6 =.

b) 57 Bd1? Bxd1 58 Kxd1 Kc7 59 Kc2 Kc6 =.

57…Bxg4

Or: 57…Bc6 58 a4 Kc7 59 a5 +–; 57…Bg2 58 Be4 Bf1 59 a4 +– was played in the game.

58 a4

58 Be4? Bd1 =.

58…Kc7 59 a5

The white pawns advance quickly, and Black is short of the one tempo he needs to save his skin. 59 Be4 +– also wins.

59…Bh5

59…Kc6 60 a6 +–.

60 a6 Be8 61 Be4 Kb8 62 c6 +–

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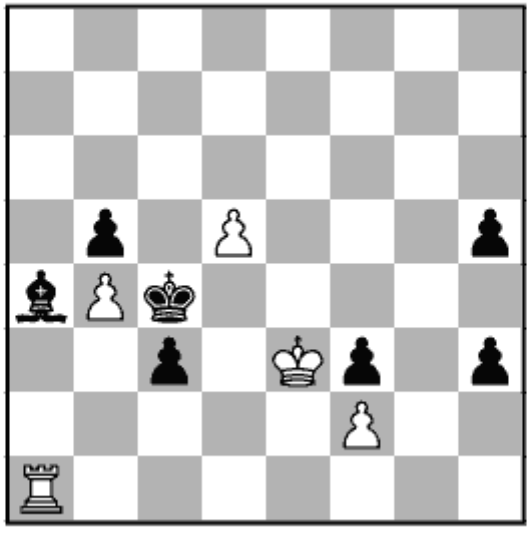


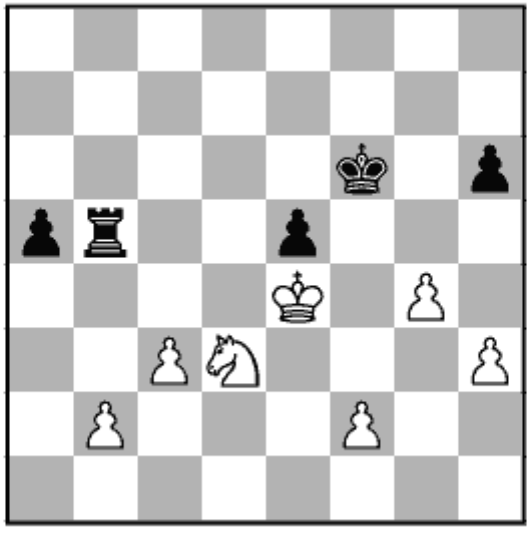
Solution 528: Black to play

Arya – M.Rahman (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

Black mustn't let the white king reach d3: **41…Bc2!** (41… Kxd5? 42 Kd3 c2 43 Rh1 and White is holding on: 43…Ke5 44 Kd2) **42 d6** (42 Kf4 Kxd5 43 Rc1 h2 –+) **42…Bf5 43 Kxf3** (43 Rd1 c2 44 Rc1 Kc3 –+) **43…Kxb4** and Black wins easily.

back



Solution 529: Black to play

Mosadeghpour – Anuj

Mumbai 2018/19

The knight is notoriously bad at stopping passed rook's pawns.

53…a4!

53…Rb3? (as played in the game) allows White to survive with 54 f3 a4 (after 54…Rb5 55 h4! White manages to cover g5, keeping the black king out, with unclear play after 55…a4 56 Nb4) 55 Nc5! Rxb2 56 Nxa4 =.

54 Nb4

Moves like 54 h4 allow the decisive 54…Rxb2! 55 Nxb2 a3 –+.

54…Kg5

White must either give up the h3-pawn or drop his king back all the way to g2.

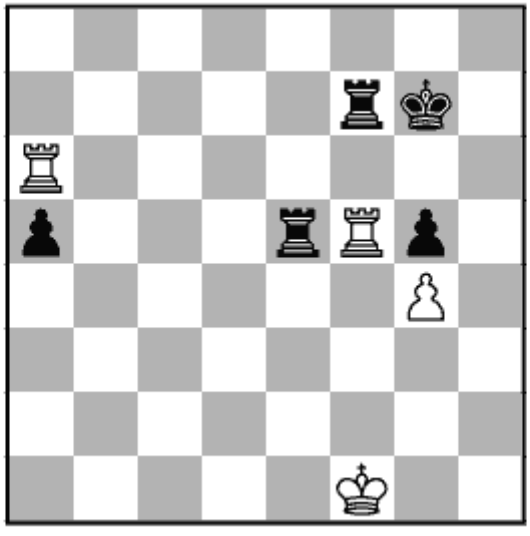
55 Kf3

55 f3 Kh4 –+.

55…Kh4 56 Kg2 e4 –+

with a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 530: White to play

Liu Yan – Zhao Yuanhe

Tianjin 2018/19

In rook endgames it is vital to determine where the king should be placed and what role it should play. A king misplaced by just one square can decide the outcome of the game.

64 Rf2!

Gaining a vital tempo by improving the white king's position. After 64 Rxf7+? Kxf7 the white king on f1 is too far away, so White does not have time to bring his rook to d4. 65 Kf2 (65 Rd6 a4 66 Ra6 Re4 –+) 65…Ke7 (played in the game) 66 Rc6 Kd7 –+.

64…Rxf2+ 65 Kxf2 Kf7 66 Rd6 Ke7

66…a4 67 Ra6 Re4 68 Kf3 = shows why the king needed to be on f2!

67 Rd4 Ke6 68 Kf3 Rb5 69 Ra4

and White holds the position. For example: **69…Kd5 70 Ke3 Kc5 71 Ra1 Kb6 72 Ke4**.

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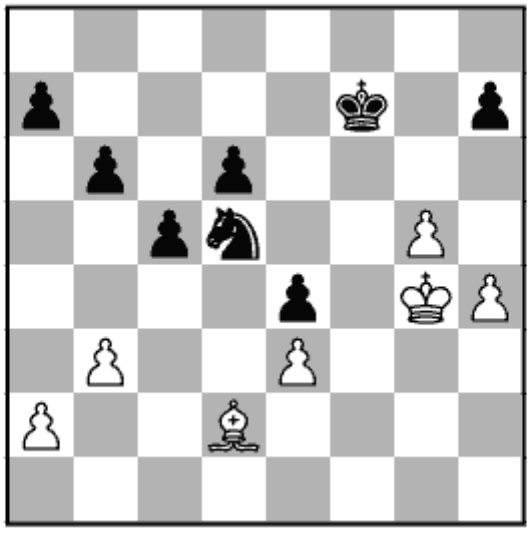

Solution 531: Black to play

Srihari – Pranesh

Mumbai 2018/19

Black can give up the e4-pawn and concentrate on promoting a queenside pawn.

38…b5!

Not 38…Ne7? 39 h5 d5 40 Kf4 with a roughly equal position. For example: 40…Ke6 (the game was agreed drawn here) 41 b4 Nf5 42 bxc5 bxc5 43 Bc1 =.

39 Kf5 c4! 40 bxc4 bxc4 41 Kxe4 c3

The c-pawn cannot be stopped, but White still has one hope of saving the game.

42 Be1

42 Bc1 Nb4 –+.

42…c2 43 Bd2 Nb4 44 a3 Na2 45 h5!? Ke6!

Black must avoid 45…c1Q? 46 Bxc1 Nxc1, when 47 g6+! enables White to eliminate all the remaining black pawns: 47…hxg6 48 hxg6+ Kxg6 49 Kd5 =.

46 g6 h6

Having avoided the liquidation of the kingside pawns, Black wins easily.

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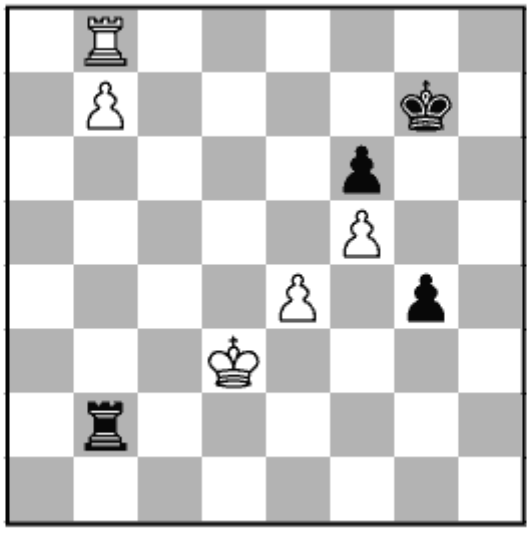

Solution 532: White to play

Ringoir – C.Yoo

Burlingame 2019

White can force a pawn through without the help of his king, but he needs to be careful how he deals with Black's g-pawn.

55 Kc3!

55 Ke3? g3 = was played in the game, while 55 e5? also fails to win: 55…g3 56 exf6+ Kf7 =.

55…Rb1 56 Kc2

Not 56 e5? g3 =.

56…Rb6

Or: 56…Rb5 57 Kd2 +–; 56…g3 57 Kxb1 g2 58 Rg8+ +–.

57 Kd2 g3 58 Ke2 Rb2+ 59 Kf1

After White plays e5, Black will be forced to give up his rook for the b-pawn; e.g., **59…Kh7 60 Kg1 Kg7 61 e5 fxe5 62 f6+ +–**.

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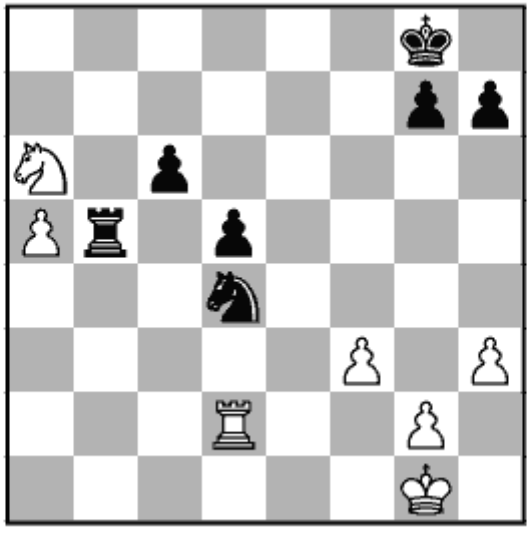

Solution 533: Black to play

E.Li – Betaneli

Burlingame 2019

If Black takes the a5-pawn immediately, White can resist thanks to an awkward counterattack against the black pawns.

42…Ne6!

42…Rxa5? 43 Nb4 = is immediately drawish, while after 42… Nb3?! 43 Rb2 Nxa5 (43…Rxa5?! 44 Nb4! {as played in the game} 44…Nd4 45 Rd2 =) 44 Rxb5 cxb5 45 Kf2 Kf7 46 Nc7 (46 Ke2!?) 46…b4 47 Nxd5 White will save the game with further accurate play.

43 Ra2 Kf7!

It is important to bring the king up so that White can't drive the knight from e6. Now Black should win.

Instead 43…c5? 44 f4 g6 45 g4! gives White enough counterplay. For example: 45…Nxf4 46 Nc7 Rb7 47 a6! is unclear.

44 Kf2

Slightly better is 44 f4!? Kf6 45 g4 g6!? (or 45…Nxf4 46 Nc7 Rb7 47 a6 Ra7 –+) 46 Kf2 c5 –+.

44…c5 45 Ke3

45 f4 Kf6 –+.

45…Ke7 46 Kd2 Kd6 –+

With White's knight trapped on a6, he has a hopeless position.

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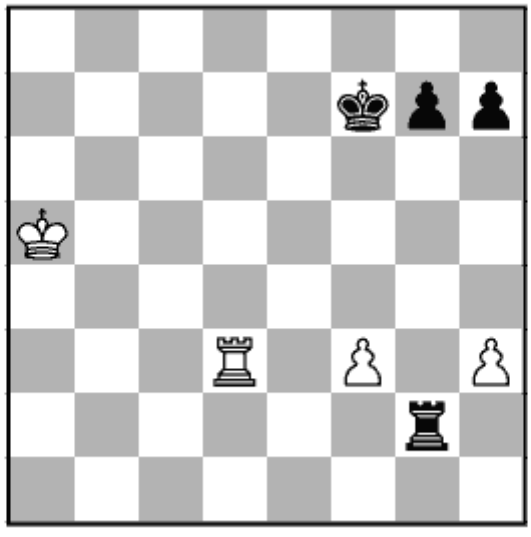


Solution 534: Black to play

E.Li – Betaneli

Burlingame 2019

Cutting off the white king is more important than winning a pawn.

61…Rb2!

Not:

a) 61…Rh2? 62 Kb4 Rxh3 transposes to the 61…Rg3? line.

b) After 61…Rg3? 62 Kb4 Rxh3 (62…Kf6 63 Kc3 Rxh3 64 Kd2 =+ was played in the game) 63 Kc3 the white king returns to the kingside and the extra pawn will prove insufficient for victory. For example: 63…Rh6!? (63…Rh2 64 Rd7+ Kf6 65 Kd3 =+) 64 Rd7+! (64 Kd2? Re6 –+) 64…Kf8 65 Rd8+ Ke7 66 Rh8! and Black can't cut the king off.

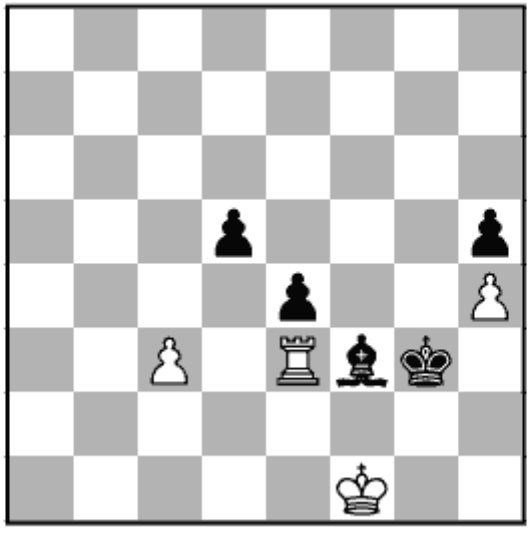
62 Ka4

62 Rd7+ Kf6 63 Rd6+ Ke7 64 Rd3 Ke6 –+.

62…Ke6 63 Ka3 Rh2 –+

Black has won a vital tempo and now has a decisive advantage.

back



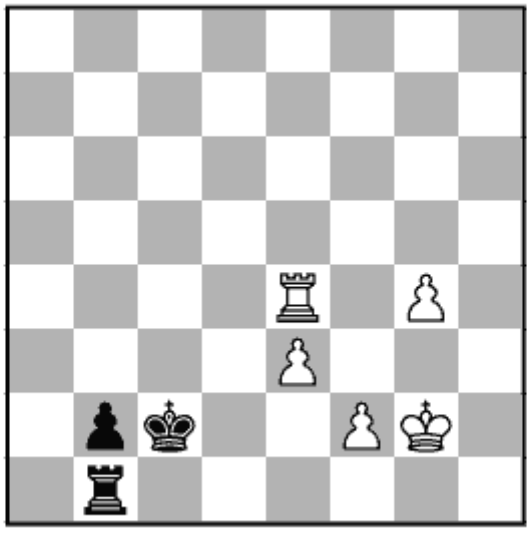
Solution 535: White to play

J.Song – S.Spiegel

Hastings 2018/19

Passive defence will not save White. He needs to transfer his king to e3. **56 Re1!** (after 56 Kg1? Kxh4 57 Kh2 Kg4 58 Re1 Kf4 59 Ra1 e3 –+, as played in the game, Black soon won) **56…Kxh4 57 Kf2 Kg4 58 Ke3!** (58 Ra1? Kf4 –+) **58…h4 59 Rg1+ Kf5 60 Rg8!** (now that White has activated his rook, he has no special problems) **60…h3 61 Rh8 Kg4 62 Kf2** (but not 62 Rg8+? Kh4 63 Kf2 h2! 64 Rh8+ Bh5 65 Kg2 e3 –+, when Black gets a new queen) **62…Bg2 63 Rg8+ Kf4 64 Rf8+ =**.

back



Solution 536: Black to play

Norinkeviciute – L.Butt

Hastings 2018/19

With passed pawns racing on opposing flanks, you need to fight hard for every tempo!

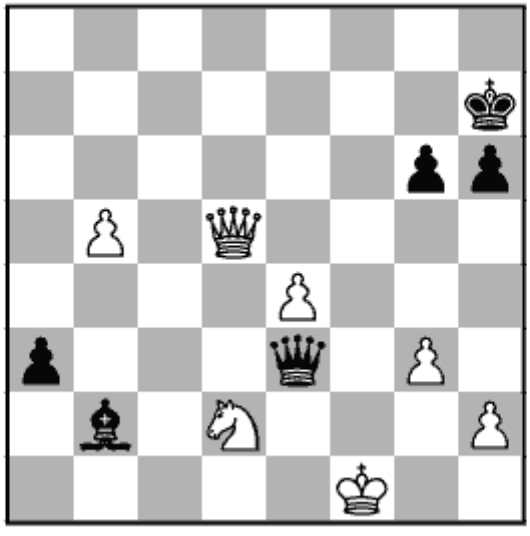
86…Kc3!!

Exploiting White's lack of checking distance to improve the king's position before winning the white rook. After the immediate 86…Ra1? 87 Rb4 b1Q 88 Rxb1 Rxb1 89 Kf3 = Black is not in time to win (compare the main line), while 86…Rg1+? 87 Kxg1 b1Q+ (as played in the game) 88 Kh2 gives White a solid fortress against the queen.

87 Re8 Ra1 88 Rb8 b1Q 89 Rxb1 Rxb1 –+

Of course, it is not so easy to calculate from the starting position right to the end of the line, but it is clear that Black's chances are greatly helped by gaining time! Black is indeed winning here: **90 Kf3** (90 g5 Kc4 91 Kg3 Kd5 –+) **90…Kc4 91 Ke4 Kc5 92 Kf5 Kd6** and Black gets in front of the pawns. White would need to play **93 Kf6 Kd7 94 Kf7** to keep the black king out, but then **94…Rg1** starts picking off the pawns.

back



Solution 537: White to play

Arya – Czebe (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

If Black has time to secure his king, he will win. So White urgently needs to create counterplay.

33 Qf7+! Bg7 34 Qa2!

Taking aim at the a3-pawn. Now White draws thanks to the threat of b6. After 34 Qd5? h5 –+ it is too late for 35 Qa2 since 35…Kh6 36 b6 Bd4 wins.

34…h5

Or 34…Kh8 35 b6 (35 e5!? also yields a draw) 35…Bd4 36 Qf7! Qxd2 (36…a2 37 Qf8+ Kh7 38 Qf7+ =) 37 Qe8+ Kh7 38 Qd7+! =.

35 b6! Bd4

35…Qxb6 36 Qxa3 =.

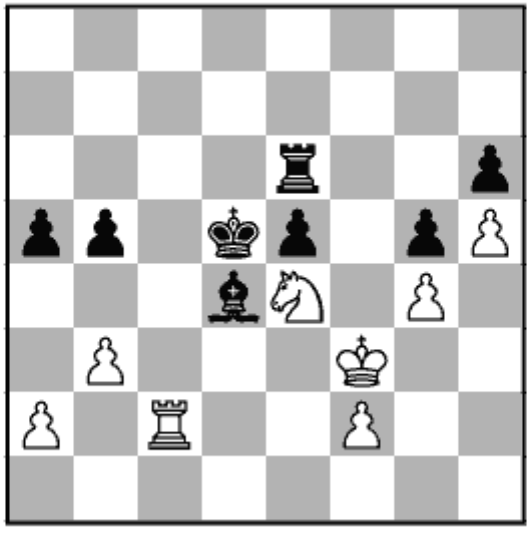
36 Qf7+ Kh6 37 Qf8+ Kh7

No better is 37…Bg7 38 Qf4+!.

38 Qf7+

with a repetition of moves.

back



Solution 538: Black to play

Aditya – Deviatkin

Mumbai 2018/19

If Black defends passively, White will gradually exploit his advantage and win the game.

46…Re7!

46…Rc6? 47 Rxc6 Kxc6 48 Ng3 +– is easy enough for White, while 46…a4? 47 Rc8 axb3 48 axb3 +– is hopeless for Black. There may follow 48…Ra6 49 Rd8+ (as played in the game) 49…Ke6 50 Rxd4 +– or 48…Rc6 49 Rd8+ Ke6 50 Rb8 Rb6 51 Rh8 +–.

47 Nf6+

Or 47 Ng3 e4+ 48 Ke2 Bc5 and Black is fine.

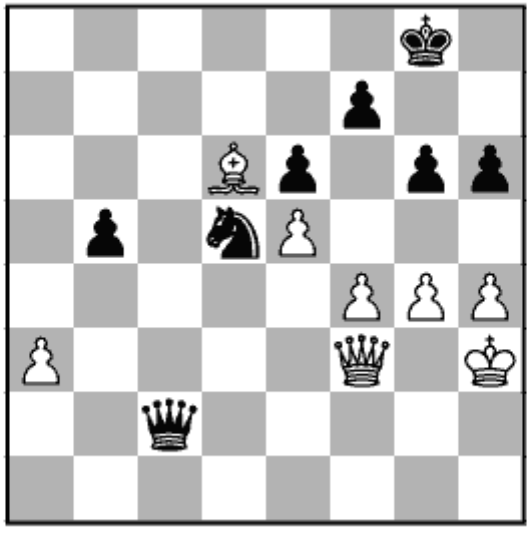
47…Kd6 48 Ke4 Rf7!

Black mustn't let the king reach f5.

49 Ne8+ Ke7 50 Nc7 Rf4+ 51 Kd5 Rxg4 +=

Black is still worse, but should certainly hold the draw.

back



Solution 539: White to play

Kishor – Soham

Mumbai 2018/19

Material is level, but White has serious problems with his king. Ordinary moves would lead to defeat.

55 f5!

Otherwise: 55 g5? h5 –+; 55 Kg3? Nc3 56 Kh3 Ne2 –+; 55 h5? (played in the game) 55…Qc1 56 f5 Nf4+ 57 Kg3 g5 –+.

55…gxf5

Or 55…g5 56 fxe6 Nf4+ 57 Kg3 Nxe6 (57…Ne2+ 58 Kh2 =) 58 hxg5 hxg5 59 Be7! =. The exchange of h-pawns has left the black king exposed.

56 gxf5 Qxf5+ 57 Qxf5 exf5 58 h5!

Fixing the pawn on h6 in order to attack it with the bishop. The position is close to a draw. For example, **58…Nf4+ 59 Kh4 f6 60 exf6 Nd5 61 Be5 Kf7 62 Bd6 Nxf6 63 Bf4 =**.

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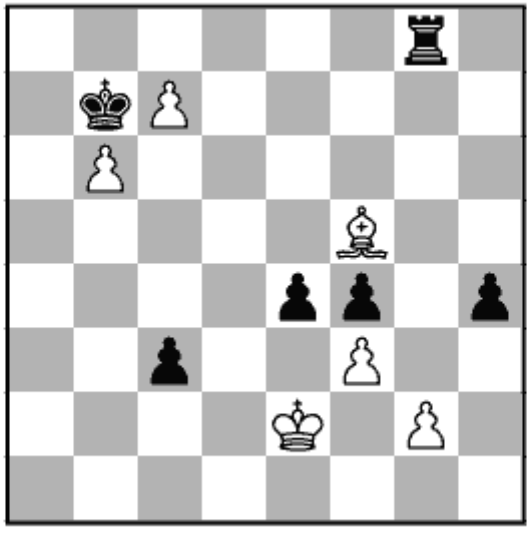


Solution 540: White to play

Lu Shanglei – Liu Guanchu

Tianjin 2018/19

If you calculate the consequences of taking on e4, then the correct move is fairly easy to find.

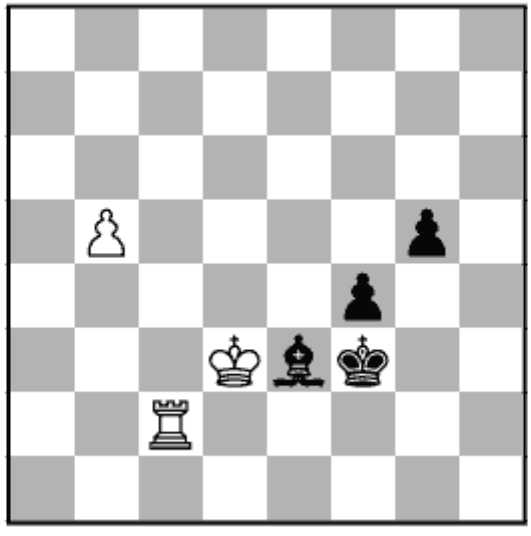
50 Bh3!

Not 50 fxe4? Rxg2+ (after 50…c2? 51 Kd2 Rxg2+ 52 Kc1 Rg8 53 Kxc2 {as played in the game} White is OK because there is no check on g3) 51 Kd3 Rg8, when unfortunately the king comes under check on c3: 52 Kxc3 (52 Be6 Rh8 53 e5 f3 –+) 52…h3! 53 Bxh3 Rg3+ –+.

50…e3 51 Kd3 Re8 52 Kxc3

Black has no way to strengthen his position: **52…Rf8** (52… e2? 53 c8Q+ +–) **53 Kd3 Re8 =**.

back



Solution 541: White to play

L.Butt – J.Song

Hastings 2018/19

57 Rb2!

After 57 Rc6? g4 58 b6, as played in the game, Black can win with 58…g3! 59 b7 Ba7 60 Ra6 Bb8 61 Ra8 g2 –+.

57…Bb6

57…g4 58 b6 Bxb6 59 Rxb6 g3 60 Rg6 =.

58 Ra2!

White must deny the bishop the a7-square. Not 58 Rc2? g4 59 Rc6 Be3, which transposes to the 57 Rc6? line.

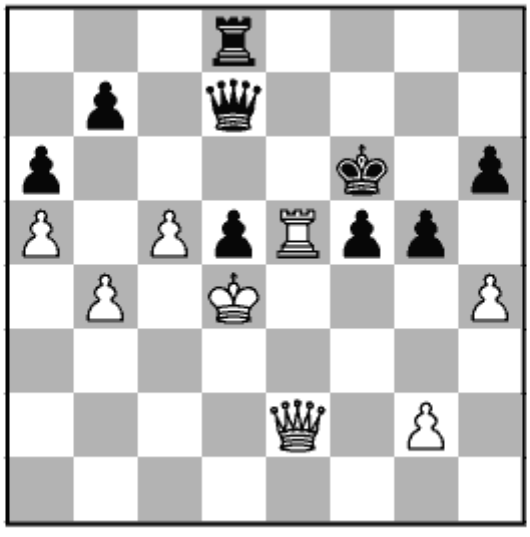
58…g4 59 Ra6 Be3 60 b6 Bxb6

Not 60…g3? 61 b7 +–.

61 Rxb6 g3 62 Rg6

with a drawn position.

back



Solution 542: Black to play

Gopal – A.Donchenko

Stockholm 2018/19

Black must urgently go on the counterattack.

38…Qa4!

38…gxh4? 39 Qh5 Kg7 40 Qxh4 Re8 41 Qe1 +– gives White a decisive advantage, while after 38…Qf7? 39 hxg5+ hxg5 the quickest way to win is 40 g4! fxg4 41 Qxg4 +–.

39 hxg5+

39 Re6+ Kf7 40 Ke5 Qa1+! =.

39…hxg5 40 Re6+ Kf7 41 Ke5

Or 41 Re7+ Kf8 42 Qe6 Qa1+ 43 Kd3 Qd1+ =.

41…Qa1+! 42 Kxf5 Qb1+ 43 Ke5 Qa1+ 44 Kf5 Qb1+ ½-½

It's perpetual check.

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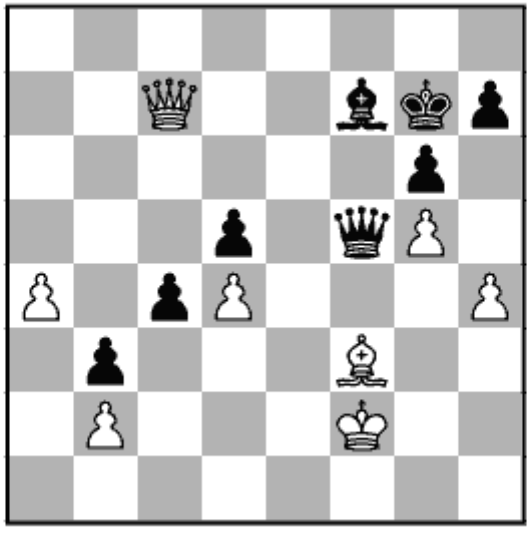

Solution 543: Black to play

L.Butt – Royal (variation)

Hastings 2018/19

Because White's bishop has limited mobility, Black is able to promote one of his pawns on the queenside.

44…c3! 45 Qxc3

45 bxc3 b2 –+.

45…Qc2+ 46 Be2 Qxc3 47 bxc3 Be6!

It was not too late to go astray and let White escape his fate: 47…b2? 48 Bd3 Be6 49 Bb1! Bf5 50 Ba2 = and White will draw thanks to his passed a-pawn.

48 Bd1

48 Ke3 b2 49 Bd3 Bf5 –+.

48…b2 49 Bc2 Bf5 –+

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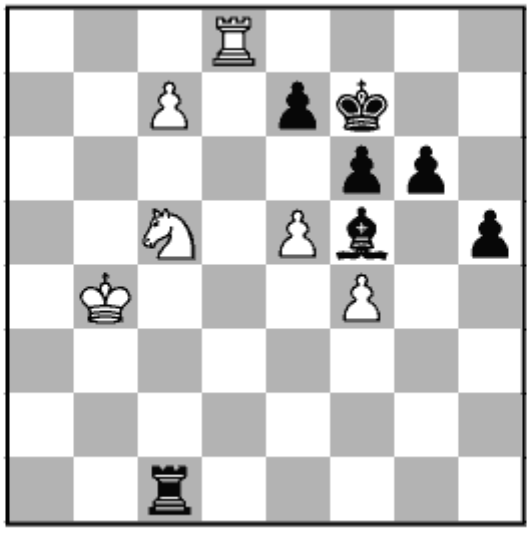

Solution 544: White to play

Pranav – Snehal

Mumbai 2018/19

If White proceeds in straightforward fashion and promotes his pawn directly, Black will give up the rook and achieve a draw thanks to his kingside pawn-mass. A little subtlety is required.

40 Rh8!

40 e6+? Bxe6 41 Nxe6 Kxe6 42 c8Q+ Rxc8 43 Rxc8 Kf5 =.

40…Bg4 41 Rh7+

41 e6+? Bxe6 42 Rh7+ Ke8! 43 Nxe6 Kd7 44 Nf8+ Kxc7 45 Nxg6 Kd6 with a drawn position.

41…Ke8

41…Kf8 42 e6 Rxc5 43 Kxc5 Bxe6 44 Rh8+ +– gives White two extra tempi compared to the 40 e6+? line.

42 Rg7!?

This is the easiest way to pick up the g6-pawn, after which Black's position is hopeless. Not 42 e6? Bxe6 43 Nxe6 Kd7, which transposes to the 41 e6+? line. In the game White played 42 Kb5?!, but this makes no progress after 42…Bd7+, as White must retrace his steps with 43 Kb4.

42…Rb1+

Or: 42…Bf5 43 Rxg6 +–; 42…h4 43 Rxg6 Bf5 44 e6 +–.

43 Kc4 Rc1+ 44 Kd4 Rd1+ 45 Ke3 Rc1 46 e6 Bxe6 47 Nxe6 Kd7 48 Rg8 +–

Now that his king is close to Black's kingside pawns, the rook vs pawns ending will be a trivial win for White.

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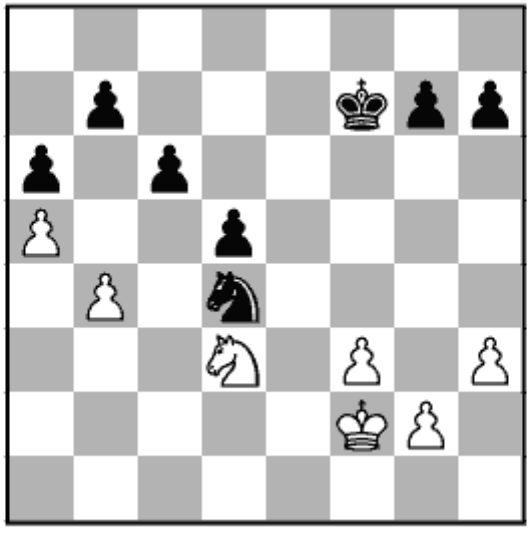

Solution 545: Black to play

E.Li – Betaneli (variation)

Burlingame 2019

Black needs to cover the c5-square without delay.

42…Nb3!

After 42…Ne6? 43 f4 Black can't win because of the constant threat of an f5 advance: 43…Kf6 44 g4 g6 45 Ke3 with a drawn position, since 45…Ke7 is well met by 46 Nc5.

43 f4

Or 43 Ke3 Ke6, and then:

a) 44 Nc5+ Nxc5 45 bxc5 and now not 45…g5? 46 f4! =, but 45…Kf5! 46 f4 d4+! –+.

b) 44 f4 Kd6 45 g4 (45 f5 c5 –+) 45…c5 (or 45…d4+!? 46 Ke4 c5 –+) 46 bxc5+ Kc6!? (46…Nxc5 47 Nc1 –/+) 47 f5 Nxa5 and Black should win.

43…Ke6 44 g4 d4!

Not 44…Kd6? 45 f5 c5 46 Nxc5 with a drawn pawn ending: 46…Nxc5 47 bxc5+ Kxc5 48 g5 Kd6 49 g6! hxg6 50 fxg6 =.

45 f5+ Kd5 46 g5 c5 47 Nxc5

47 bxc5 Nxa5 –+.

47…Nxc5 48 bxc5 Ke5! –+

and Black wins.

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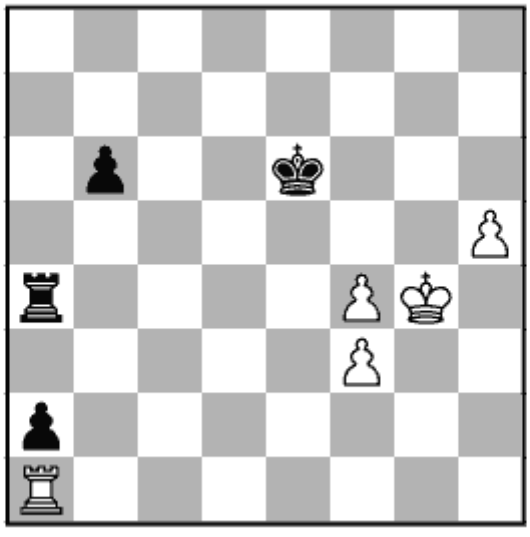

Solution 546: White to play

Sagar Shah – Kravtsiv

Chennai 2012

The only plan for White to save himself is to transfer his king to the queenside.

57 h6!

After 57 Kg5?, 57…Kf7? was played in the game, when 58 Kf5 = draws. The correct reply is 57…b5! since then the white king will not intercept the b-pawn in time, and his own pawn will not promote: 58 Kg6 (58 h6 Kf7 –+) 58…b4 59 h6 b3 60 h7 Ra8 61 f5+ Ke5 –+.

57…Kf6 58 h7 Kg7 59 Kf5!

Black does not have time to push the pawn to b3, so White easily achieves a draw: **59…Kxh7 60 Ke6** (60 Ke5!? =) **60… Kg7 61 f5 b5** (61…Ra3 62 f6+ Kf8 63 Kd5 Kf7 64 Kc6 =) **62 f6+ Kf8 63 Kd5** (now the game is obviously drawn) **63…Kf7 64 Kc5 b4 65 Kc4 =**.

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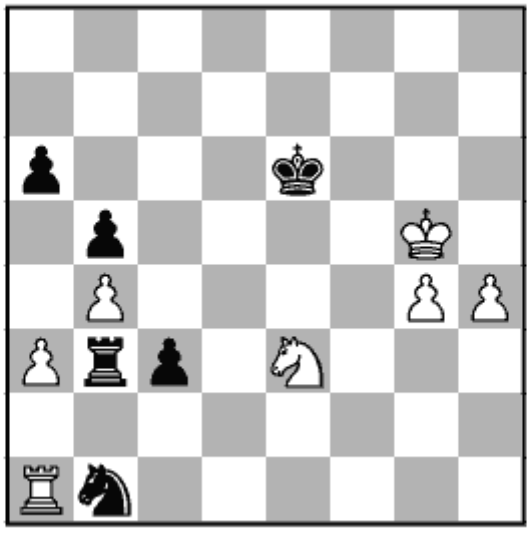


Solution 547: Black to play

Czebe – Mohota

Mumbai 2018/19

Black needs to attack the white knight, as it is all that is holding up the c-pawn.

41…Ke5!

41…Nxa3? loses to 42 Rc1 Kf7 43 h5 +–, while after 41… Rb2? (as played in the game) 42 Kg6!? Ke5 43 h5 Ke4 44 h6! the fact that the king has had time to leave g5 makes a vital difference: White will be able to give a queen check on h6 and take the black queen on c1. 44…Kxe3 45 h7 c2 (45…Rh2 46 Rxb1 +–) 46 h8Q c1Q 47 Qh6+ +–.

42 h5

42 Ra2 Ke4 (42…Nd2!? is unclear too) 43 Nd1 Nxa3 44 Re2+ Kd4 with unclear play.

42…Ke4 43 Nc2

Not 43 h6? Kxe3 44 h7 c2 –+.

43…Kd3 44 Ne1+

44 h6? loses to 44…Kxc2 45 h7 Kb2 –+.

44…Kd2

44…Ke2 45 Nc2 Kd3 46 Ne1+ =.

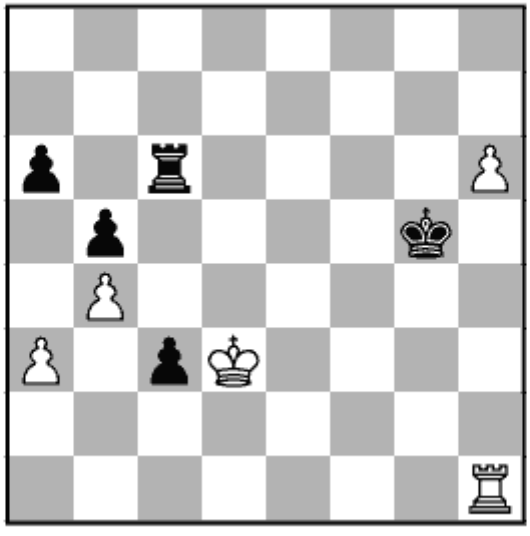
45 Nf3+

No better is 45 h6 Kxe1 46 Ra2 Rb2.

45…Ke3 46 Ne1 Kd2 =

with a repetition of moves.

back



Solution 548: Black to play

Czebe – Mohota

Mumbai 2018/19

Since almost all the pawn endgames are lost, Black needs to find some sort of trick.

51…c2

51…Rxh6? 52 Rxh6 Kxh6 53 Kxc3 +–.

52 h7 Rh6!

52…Rc8? 53 Kd2 +– was played in the game.

53 Rxh6 c1Q 54 h8Q Qc4+!

The king can't escape the checks. Not 54…Qxa3+? 55 Qc3 Qxc3+ 56 Kxc3 Kxh6 57 Kd4 +–.

55 Ke3

Or 55 Kd2 Qf4+ =.

55…Qf4+ 56 Ke2 Qe4+ 57 Kd2 Qf4+ 58 Kc2 Qe4+ =

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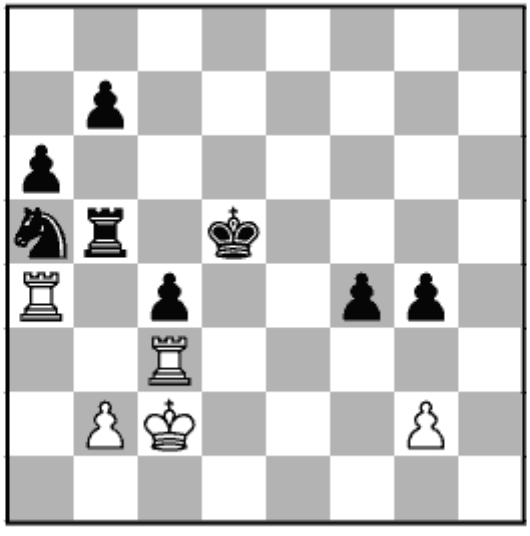

Solution 549: White to play

A.Mishra – Tarjan

Burlingame 2019

Evidently, any normal continuation will result in victory for Black.

62 b3!!

62 Ra1? was played in the game, though then 62…Nb3 63 Rh1 (63 Rf1 Nd4+ –+) 63…Nd4+ 64 Kb1 Rb4 –+ gives Black a decisive advantage.

62…Nxb3

62…cxb3+ 63 Kb2 Ke5 64 g3 =.

63 Rcxc4

63 Raxc4? loses to 63…Nd4+ 64 Kd3 Ne6 –+.

63…Nc5 64 Rab4 Rxb4

64…Ne6 65 Rxb5+ axb5 66 Rb4 =.

65 Rxb4 Ke5 66 g3!

The knight is tied to defending the b7-pawn, so Black is forced to take on g3: **66…fxg3 67 Rxg4 Ne4 68 Rg7** (not 68 Rg8? Kd4 –+) **68…b5 69 Kd3** and now White can hold the game in a number of ways.

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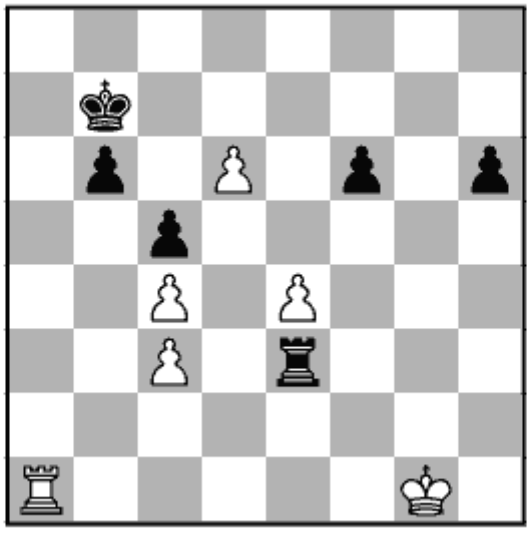

Solution 550: White to play

Keinanen – Mendonca

Stockholm 2018/19

The first move that comes to mind is 49 Rf1. But I hope you considered it long enough to see that it doesn't help White, and sought a better path.

49 d7!

Not:

a) 49 Rd1? Kc8 50 d7+ Kd8 51 Rd6 Rxe4 52 Rxf6 (52 Rxb6 Rf4 53 Rd6 h5 –+) 52…h5 53 Rxb6 Kxd7 –+.

b) After 49 Rf1? Rxe4 50 Rxf6 (as played in the game) 50… h5! 51 d7 Kc7 52 Rd6 Kd8 53 Rxb6 Kxd7 –+ Black wins easily thanks to his outside passed h-pawn.

49…Kc7

Or 49…Rd3 50 Kf2 Rxd7 51 Ke3! Kc6 52 Rh1 Rh7 53 Kf4 =.

50 Rb1

Definitely best. 50 Rf1? Rxe4 51 Rxf6 h5 transposes to the 49 Rf1? line, while after 50 Ra6?! Rd3 51 Kf2 Rxd7 52 Ke3 h5 53 Ra8! –/+ White has chances to resist because Black can't put his rook on h7, although he still has a lot of problems.

50…Rd3

Or: 50…Rxc3 51 Rxb6 Rxc4 52 Rxf6 =; 50…Rxe4 51 Rxb6 Rxc4 52 Rxf6 =; 50…Rg3+?! 51 Kf2 Rd3 52 Ke2 Rxd7 53 Rf1 Rf7 54 Rf5 +=.

51 Rf1!

Now Black cannot take the e4-pawn and White is saved.

51…Rxd7

51…Kxd7 52 Rxf6 Kc7 transposes.

52 Rxf6 Rd3

52…Rd6 53 Rf7+ =.

53 Rxh6

53 Rf7+ Kc6 54 Rf6+ Kb7 comes to the same thing.

53…Rxc3 54 Rh7+!

It is very important to drive the king away to a6. Not 54 Kf2? Rxc4 55 Ke3 Rd4 –+.

54…Kc6 55 Rh6+ Kb7 56 Rh7+ Ka6 57 Kf2 Rxc4 58 Ke3

White achieves a draw thanks to the fact that the black king is a long way from the e-pawn.

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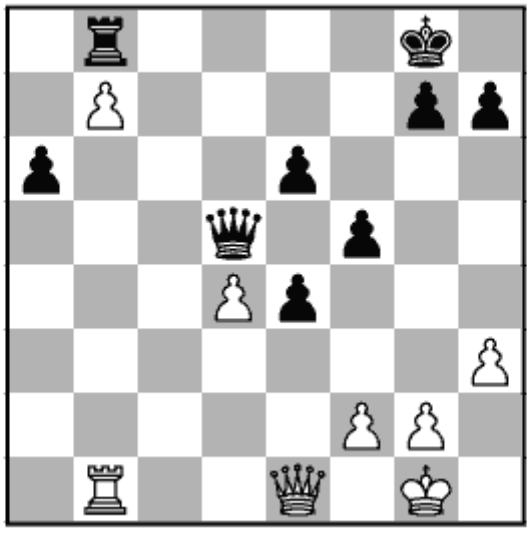


Solution 551: White to play

Varshini – T.Ravi (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

There's no obvious way to force the b7-pawn through to promotion, but White finds a clever way to produce a second passed pawn!

38 Qc3!

38 Qc1? Qd7! = is equal, while after 38 Qb4?! Qb5!? 39 Qxb5 axb5 40 Rxb5 Kf7 Black will most likely achieve a draw.

38…Qd7 39 d5! Rxb7

After 39…exd5?! 40 Qe5! White wins immediately: 40…Qd8 (40…Rxb7 41 Rxb7 Qxb7 42 Qe8#) 41 Qe6+ Kh8 42 Rc1 +–.

40 Rxb7 Qxb7 41 Qc6!?

41 d6?! e3! makes things far trickier for White, though after the precise 42 fxe3 f4 43 Qc7 Qb3 44 d7! (44 exf4? Qe3+ 45 Kh1 Qxf4 =) 44…Qxe3+ 45 Kf1 Qd3+ 46 Ke1 +– he should be able to evade the many checks and still win.

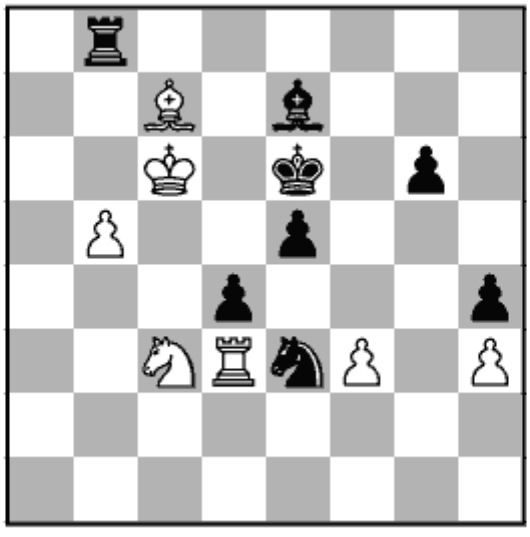
41…Qb5

41…Qb8 42 d6 +–; 41…Qb1+ 42 Kh2 Qb8+ 43 d6 +–.

42 Qxe6+ +–

with a decisive advantage. White can win in a number of ways.

back



Solution 552: Black to play

Sethuraman – Xu Yinglun

Tianjin 2018/19

With a few precise moves, Black gets a decisive advantage.

53…Nc2!

53…Ra8? 54 b6 Ra5 is unclear.

54 Nd5

54 Bxb8 Nb4+ 55 Kb7 Nxd3 –+.

54…Rxb5! 55 Nf4+ Kf5!

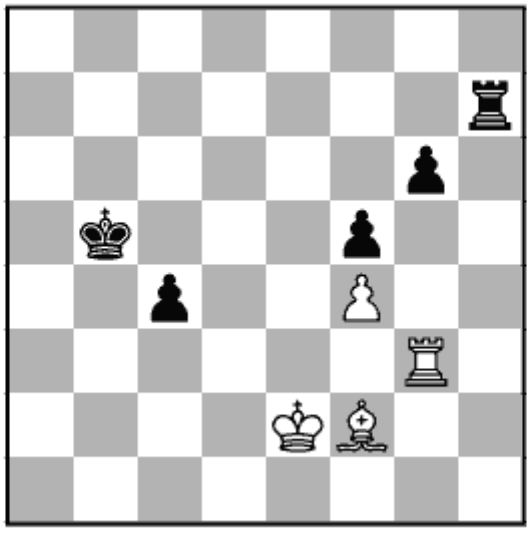
55…exf4? 56 Kxb5 is unclear since Black loses one of his pawns.

56 Kxb5 Kxf4 –+

White will lose because of his weak pawns and passive rook. For example: **57 Rd2** (57 Kc4 Ne3+ –+) **57…Na3+ 58 Kc6 Ke3!** (not 58…Kxf3?, as played in the game, since 59 Bxe5!

Nc4 60 Rd3+ Ke2 61 Rxd4 Nxe5+ 62 Kd5 is unclear) **59 Rd1 d3 –+** and White can't stop the d-pawn.

back



Solution 553: Black to play

Sandipan – Sammed Jaykumar

Mumbai 2018/19

If White puts his bishop on d4, he will be winning. So Black must prevent this.

60…Rh2!

60…Re7+? 61 Kd2 Re4 (61…Kb4 62 Rxg6 +– was played in the game) 62 Be3 Re6 63 Bd4 +–.

61 Rxg6

After 61 Kf1 Rh4 62 Be3 c3 63 Rxg6 Kc4 Black achieves a draw; e.g., 64 Ke2 Rh2+ 65 Kf3 Rh3+.

61…c3 62 Rg8

62 Rb6+ Kc4 63 Rc6+ Kb3 changes little, while 62 Ke3!? c2 63 Rg1 Kc4 64 Rf1! Kc3 65 Be1+ Kb3 66 Bd2 Rh8 should be drawn.

62…Kc4 63 Rc8+

63 Kf3 c2 64 Be3 (64 Rc8+ Kd3 65 Rd8+ Kc4 =) 64…Rh3+ 65 Rg3 Rh1 =.

63…Kb3 64 Kf1 Rh3!

The only way for Black to hold the position. After 64…c2? 65 Be3 +– White can win by giving up his bishop for the pawn.

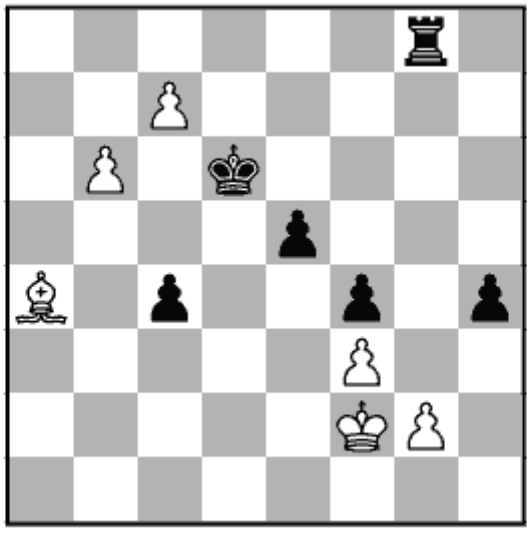
65 Be1

Or 65 Kg2 Rd3 =. White also gains nothing from 65 Ke2 Rh2 66 Kf1 Rh3.

65…Rf3+ 66 Ke2 Rxf4

with a drawn position.

back



Solution 554: White to play

Lu Shanglei – Liu Guanchu

Tianjin 2018/19

White can win in a rather unexpected way.

46 Bb5!

46 Bc2? was played in the game, when 46…h3! 47 gxh3 Kc6 48 Bf5 Kb7 = would have held.

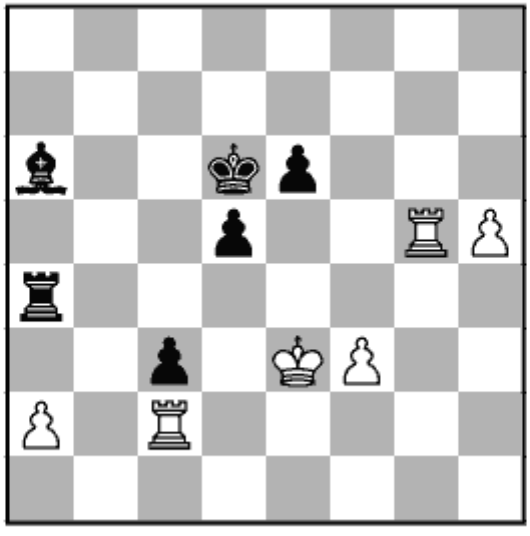
46…c3 47 Ba4! +–

Zugzwang! If it were Black's move, the game would be a draw, but as it stands he must move his rook from g8, which releases the white king. Not 47 Bd3?? Kc6 –+. After 47 Ke2? the game should end in a draw after some study-like sequences that are worth recording: 47…e4! (47…Rxg2+? loses to 48 Kd1! +–, but 47…c2 48 Kd2 e4! 49 Bc4 Re8! is also good enough to draw) 48 fxe4 f3+ 49 gxf3 c2! 50 Kd2 h3 51 e5+! Kxe5 52 b7 c1Q+ (52…Rg2+ 53 Be2! Rxe2+ 54 Kxe2 c1Q 55 c8Q Qb2+ is also a draw as long as Black chooses his checks precisely) 53 Kxc1 h2 54 c8Q h1Q+ 55 Kd2! Rg2+ 56 Be2 Qh6+! = (etc.!).

47…Rh8 48 Ke2 Rg8

Now White can win in a number of ways: **49 Kd3** (perhaps 49 Bb3!? c2 50 Kd2 +– is simpler, while there is also 49 Kd1!? e4 50 Bb3 +–) **49…c2 50 Kxc2 Rxg2+ 51 Kd3 Rg8 52 Bb3 Rh8 53 Be6 +–** and the pawn will promote.

back



Solution 555: White to play

M.Payne – A.Taylor

Hastings 2018/19

It is far from intuitively obvious what will happen after an exchange of rooks, so accurate calculation is essential here.

47 Rg4!

Both 47 Kf2? d4 (the game was agreed drawn here) 48 Rg8 Bd3 and 47 Rg8? d4+ 48 Kf2 Bd3 are unclear.

47…Rxg4

47…Bc4 48 Rxc3 +–.

48 fxg4 e5

After 48…Ke5 49 h6 d4+ 50 Kf2 Bd3 51 Rc1 Black's counterplay does not arrive in time because his e-pawn is too far back: 51…Kf6 52 Rh1 Bh7 53 a4 +–.

49 Rh2!

49 h6? d4+ 50 Ke4 d3! 51 h7 dxc2 52 h8Q =.

49…d4+ 50 Ke4!

It is important not to let the black bishop reach the b1-h7 diagonal. After 50 Kf3? Bd3! Black is no worse.

50…d3

50…Bb7+ 51 Kd3 Ba6+ 52 Kc2 +–.

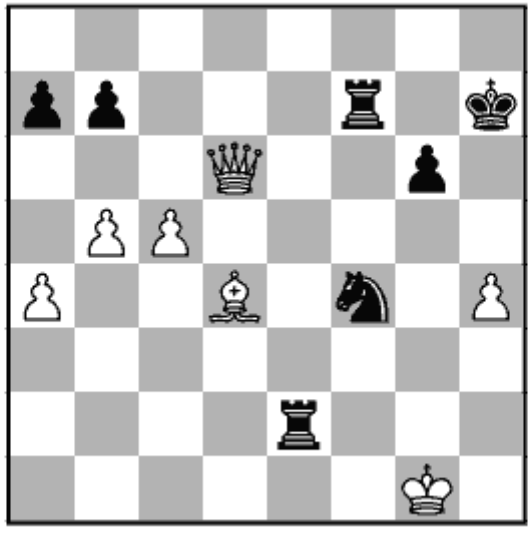
51 Ke3 d2 52 Rh1

52 Rxd2+?? cxd2 53 Kxd2 fails completely because 53…Bc4! is even winning for Black: 54 a3 (54 h6 Bg8) 54…Be6! 55 h6 (55 g5 Bg4) 55…Bg8.

52…Bb7 53 Rg1 +–

It turns out that Black is one move behind in the race, and therefore loses. For example: **53…Ke6** (53…Bf3 54 h6 +–) **54 g5 Kf7 55 g6+ Kg7** (55…Kg8 56 h6 Bf3 57 Rb1 +–) **56 Kd3** (clearer than 56 h6+!? Kxh6 57 g7 Bd5 58 Ke2! +–) **56…Bf3 57 h6+ Kxh6 58 g7 +–**.

back



Solution 556: White to play

A.Taylor – Willow

Hastings 2018/19

Mate is threatened, and White's defence is very difficult.

46 Kh1!

Not:

a) After 46 Kf1? Re4! 47 Bg1 (as played in the game; 47 Kg1 Rxd4 –+) 47…Nd3+ 48 Kg2 Ne1+ –+ the king will not escape.

b) 46 Bf6? Nh3+ 47 Kh1 Nf2+ 48 Kg1 Ne4 –+ and Black should win, although accurate play is still required. 49 Qd1 Re3 50 Be5 Nf2 51 Qa1 (51 Qd4 Nh3+ –+) 51…Nd3 –+ offers White no chance of salvation given his passive queen on a1.

46…Nh3

Or: 46…Nh5 47 Kg1 Nf4 48 Kh1 =; 46…Re1+ 47 Kh2 Re2+ 48 Kh1 =.

47 Bg1!

At first glance it seems that White is losing the bishop for nothing, but the sacrifice is justified.

47…Re1

47…Nf2+ 48 Bxf2 Rfxf2 49 Kg1 =.

48 Kg2

48 h5 Rxg1+ 49 Kh2 = also saves White's skin.

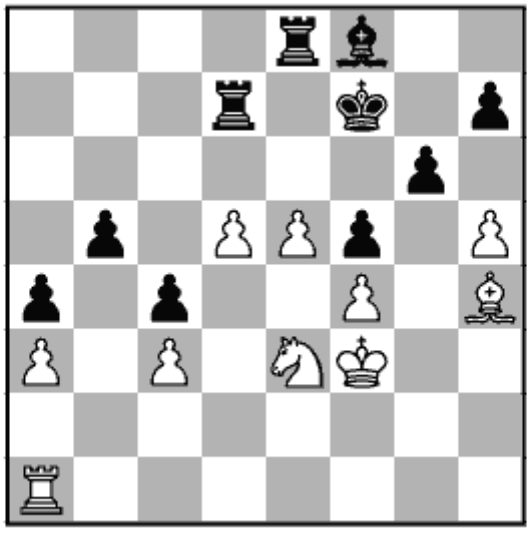
48…Nxg1

48…Nf4+ 49 Kh2 Re2+ 50 Kh1 =.

49 h5!

White opens up the enemy king and will start checking: **49… gxh5** (49…Rg7 50 Kf2 Rb1 51 hxg6+ Rxg6 52 Qe7+ =) **50 Qd3+ Kg8 51 Qd8+ Kg7 52 Qd4+ Rf6 53 Qd7+ =** and the game will end with perpetual check.

back



Solution 557: Black to play

Sandipan – Sammed Jaykumar

Mumbai 2018/19

White's passed pawns are so powerful that Black will have to sacrifice a rook for them, so it makes no sense for the rook to flee from d7.

44…Bc5!

44…Rb7? 45 e6+ Kg8 (45…Rxe6 46 dxe6+ +– is now insufficient with the rook poorly placed on b7) 46 Bf6 Bg7 47 Be5 +–.

45 Rb1!?

45 e6+ Rxe6 46 dxe6+ Kxe6 (played in the game) 47 Bf2 Rd3 +=.

45…Bxa3!

45…Bxe3? loses to 46 e6+ Rxe6 47 dxe6+ Kxe6 48 Re1 +– since Black can't eliminate both the c3- and a3-pawns.

46 e6+

46 hxg6+ hxg6 47 Rg1 Bb2 48 e6+ Rxe6 += is similar to the main line, while after 46 Rxb5 Ra7! the passed a-pawn gives Black counterplay. For example, 47 d6 Bxd6!? 48 exd6 a3 is unclear.

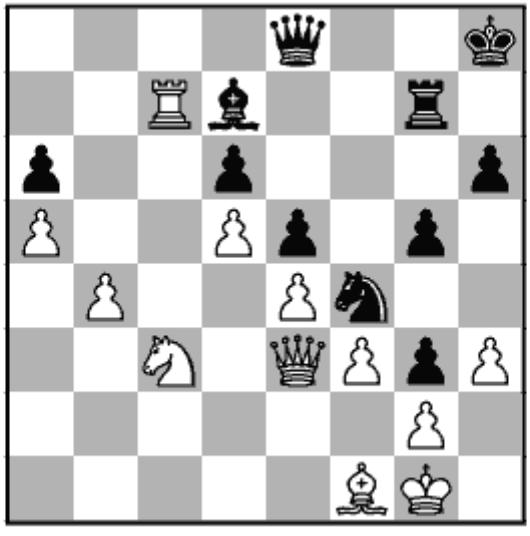
46…Rxe6 47 dxe6+ Kxe6 48 Rxb5 Rd3 +=

Soon Black should be able to exchange the remaining white pawns and achieve a draw.

back

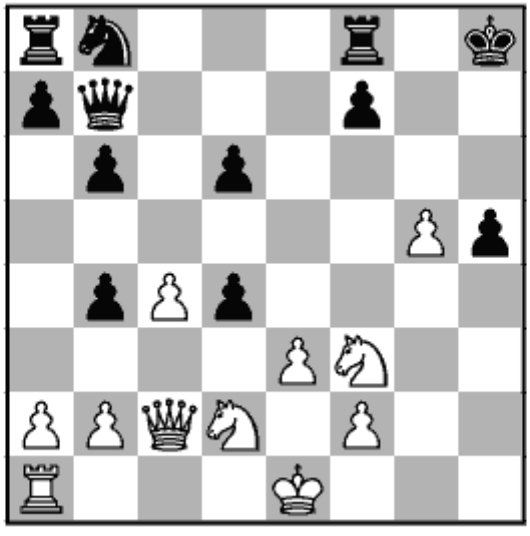
11: Nightmare!

You surely knew it was coming… Our final 43 puzzles are all difficulty level 4 or 5. There are some deep and beautiful ideas to be found here, in addition to lots of calculating practice.



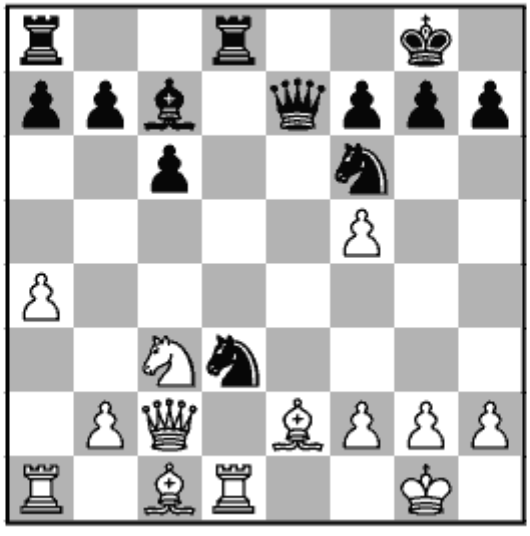
Puzzle 558: Black to play

answer



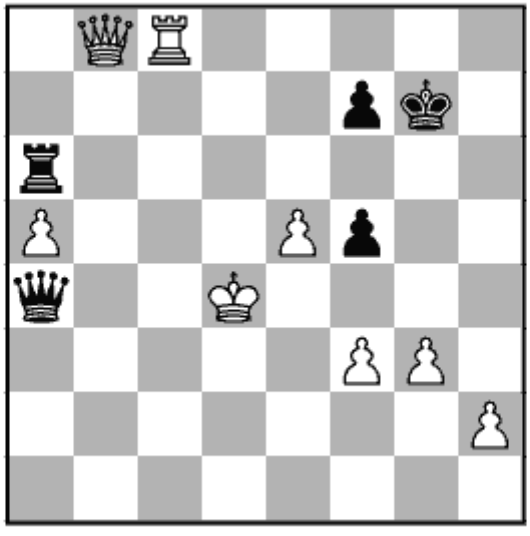
Puzzle 559: White to play

answer



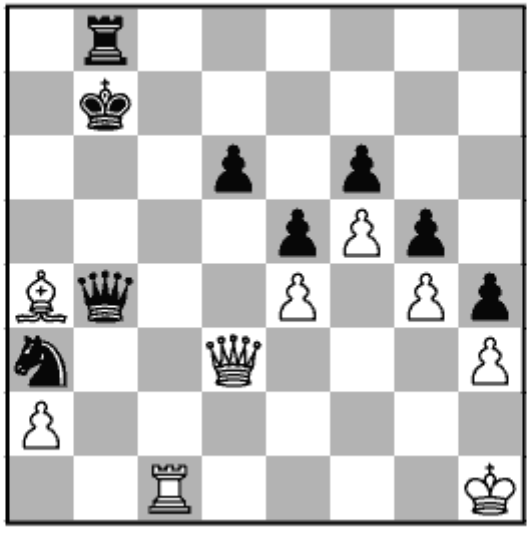
Puzzle 560: Black to play

answer



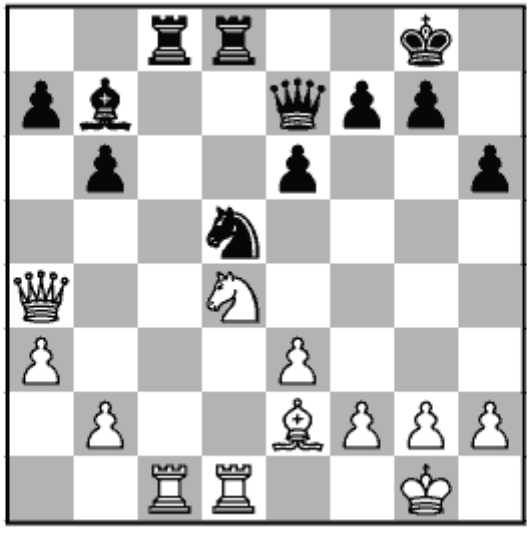
Puzzle 561: White to play

answer



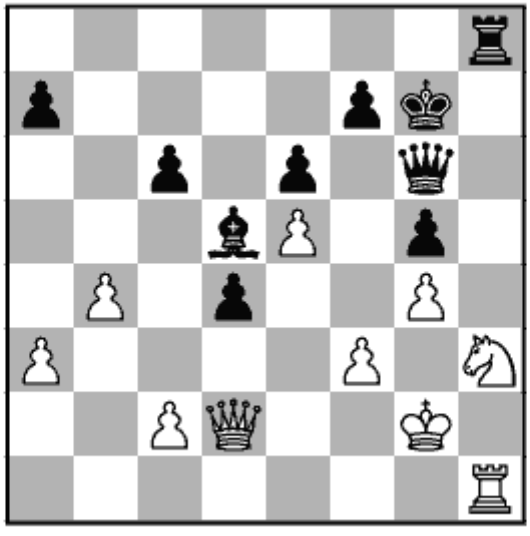
Puzzle 562: White to play

answer



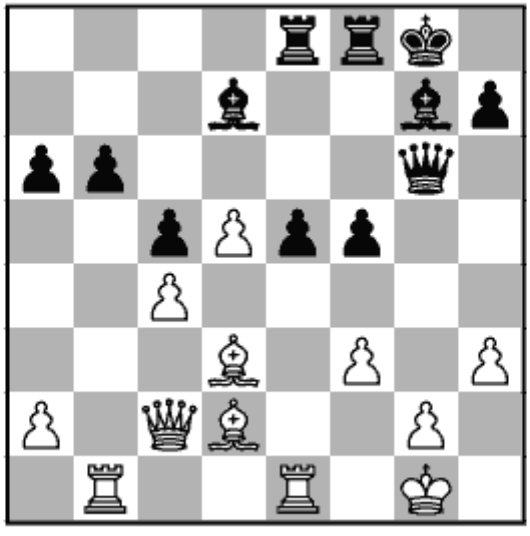
Puzzle 563: Black to play

answer



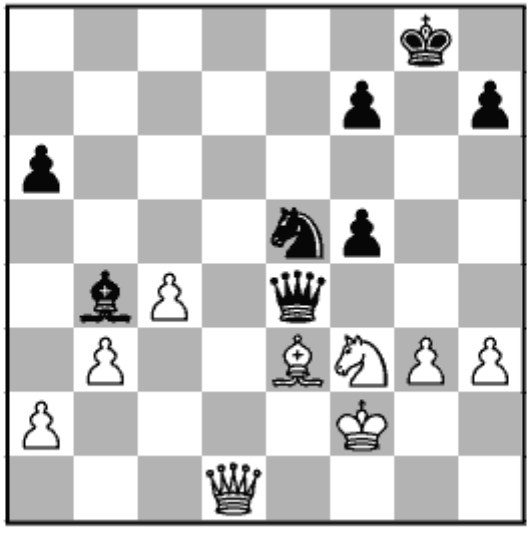
Puzzle 564: White to play

answer



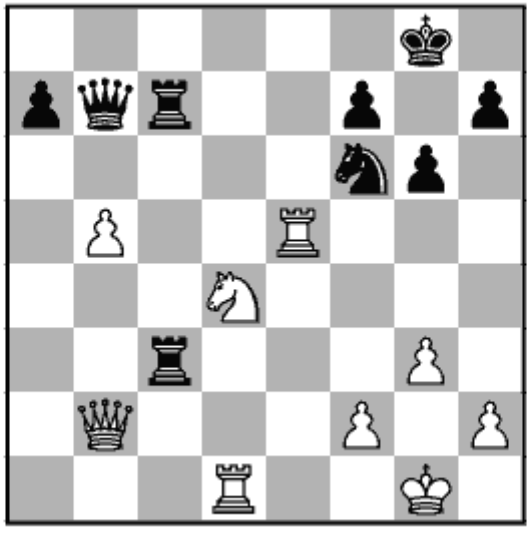
Puzzle 565: Black to play

answer



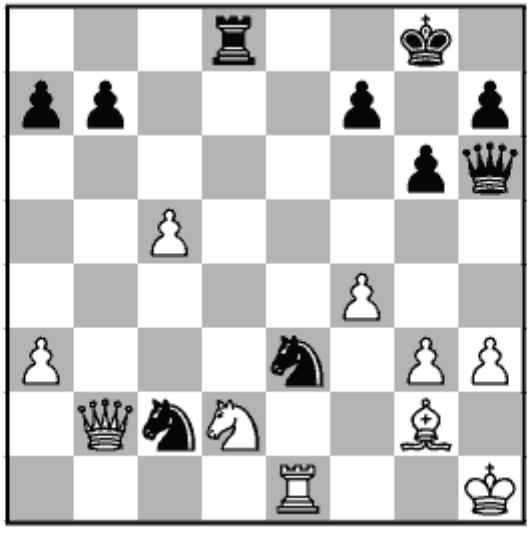
Puzzle 566: Black to play

answer



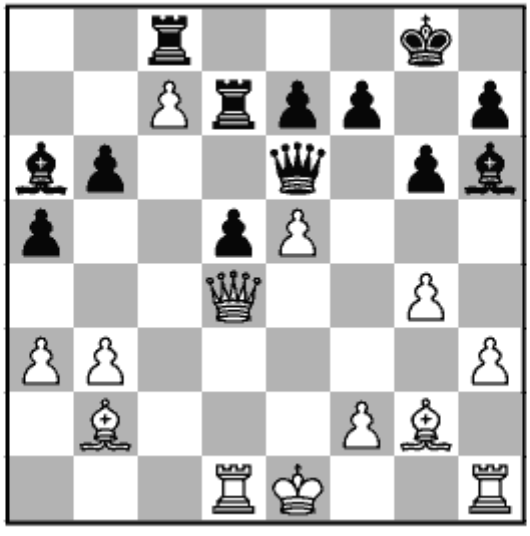
Puzzle 567: White to play

answer



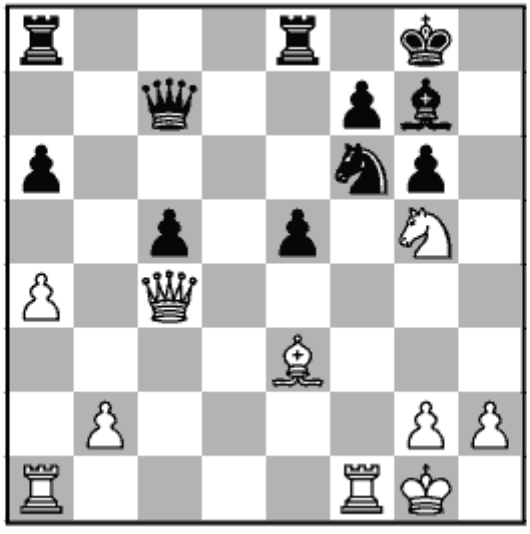
Puzzle 568: White to play

answer



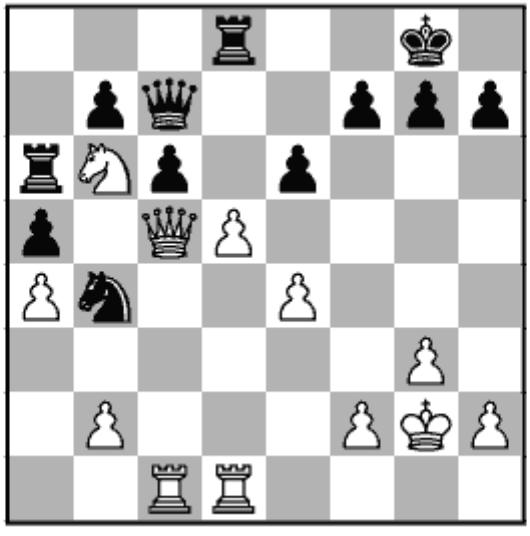
Puzzle 569: Black to play

answer



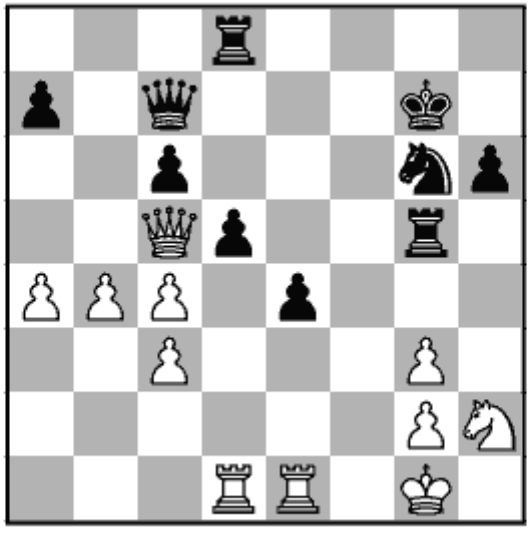
Puzzle 570: White to play

answer



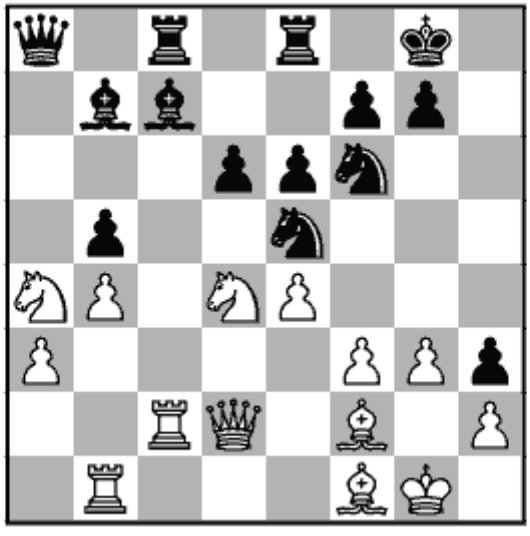
Puzzle 571: Black to play

answer



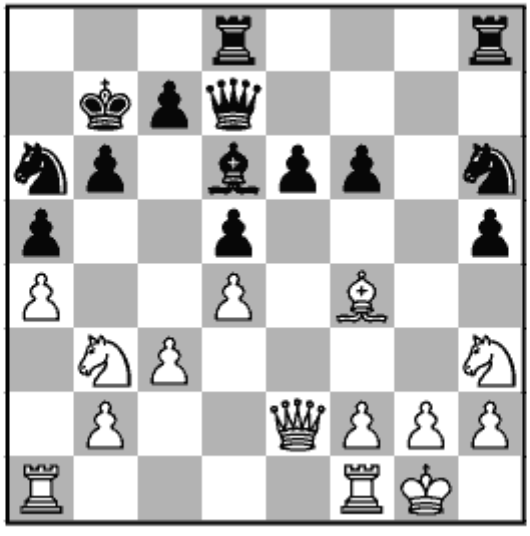
Puzzle 572: White to play

answer



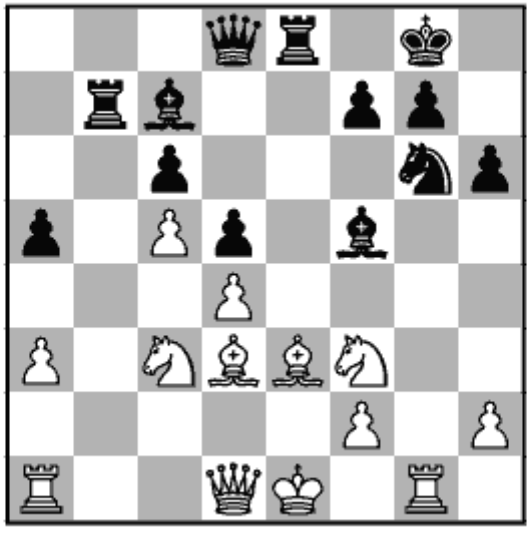
Puzzle 573: White to play

answer



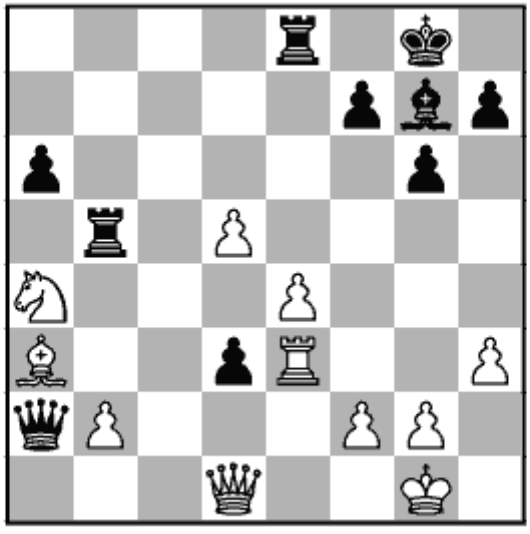
Puzzle 574: White to play

answer



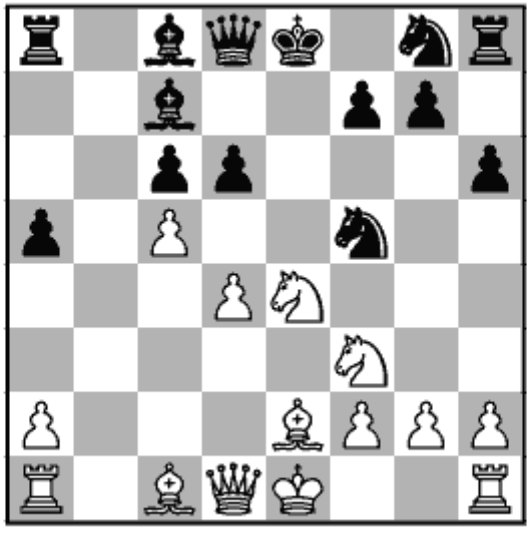
Puzzle 575: Black to play

answer



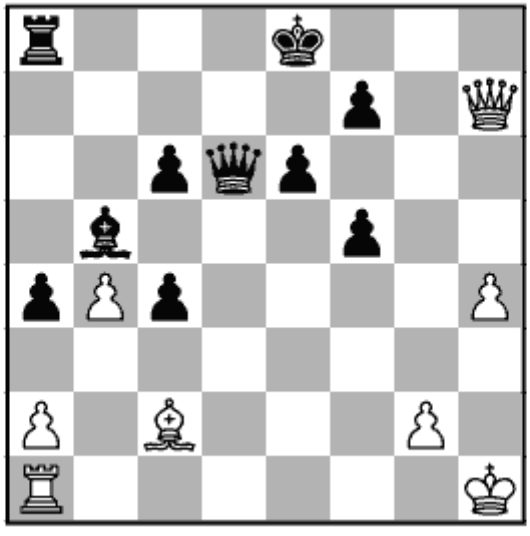
Puzzle 576: Black to play

answer



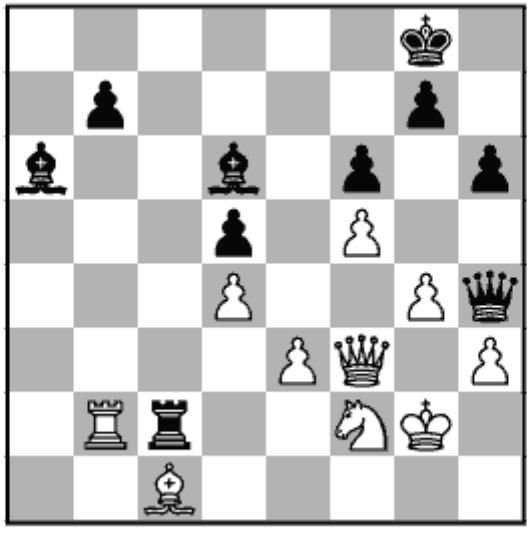
Puzzle 577: White to play

answer



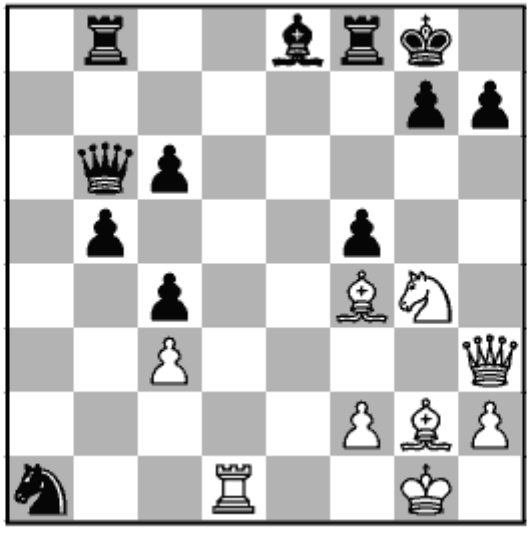
Puzzle 578: White to play

answer



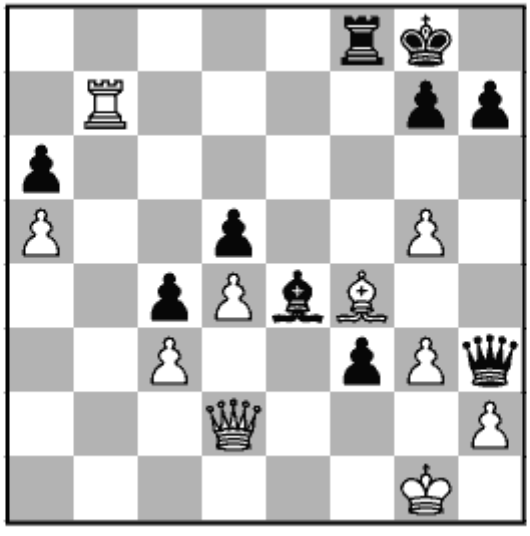
Puzzle 579: Black to play

answer



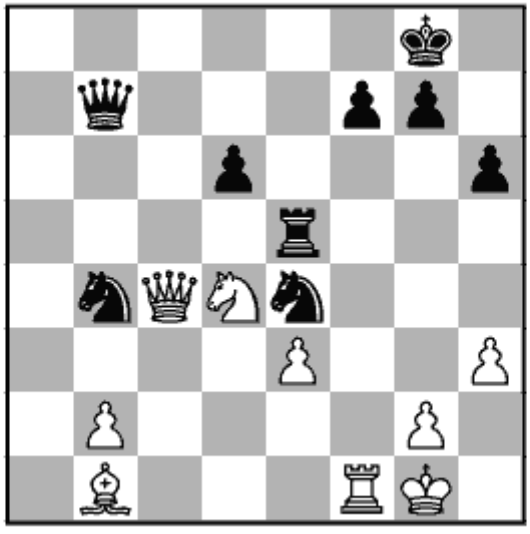
Puzzle 580: White to play

answer



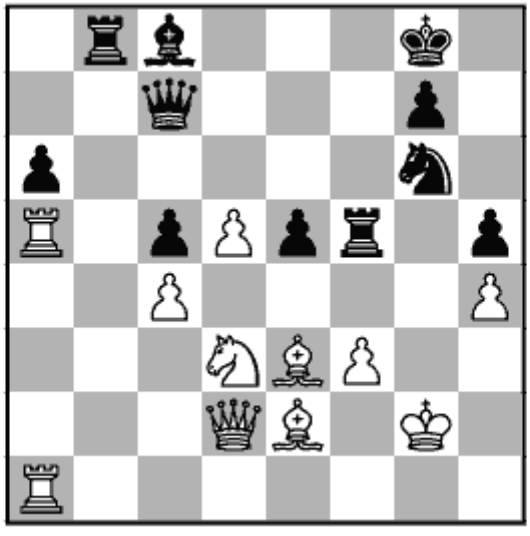
Puzzle 581: Black to play

answer



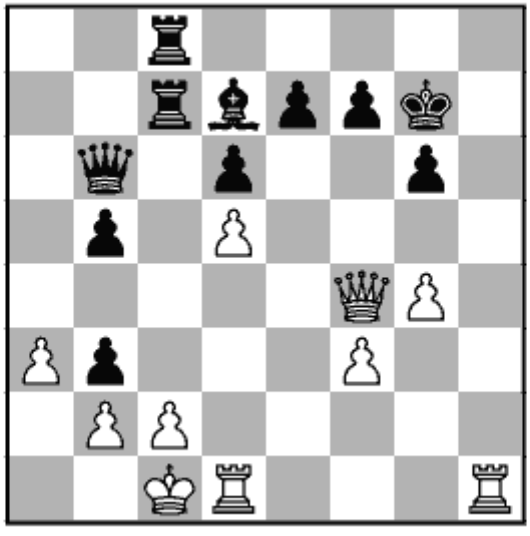
Puzzle 582: White to play

answer



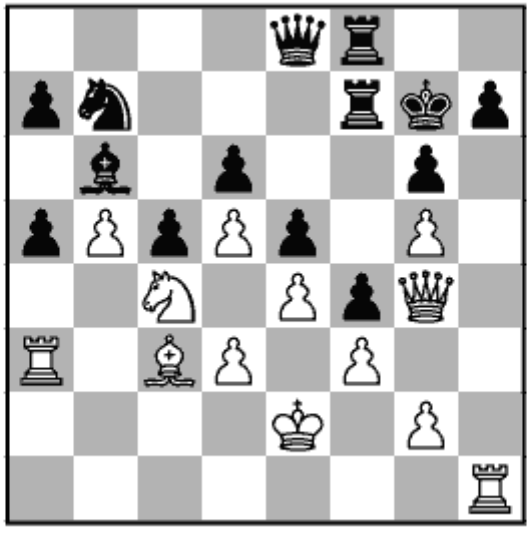
Puzzle 583: Black to play

answer



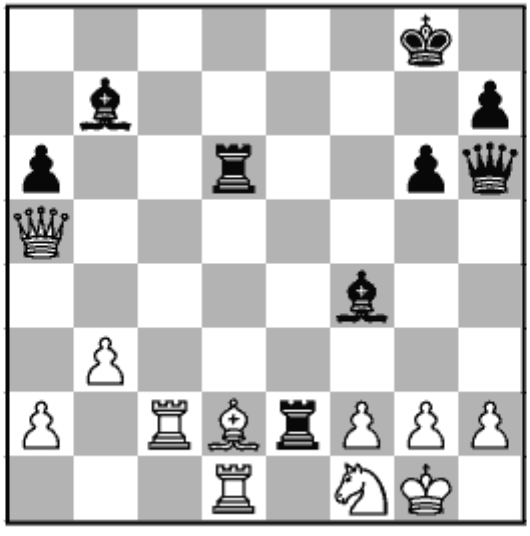
Puzzle 584: White to play

answer



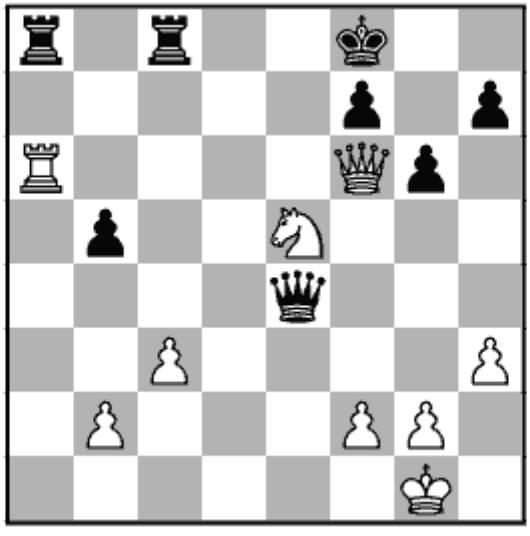
Puzzle 585: White to play

answer



Puzzle 586: Black to play

answer

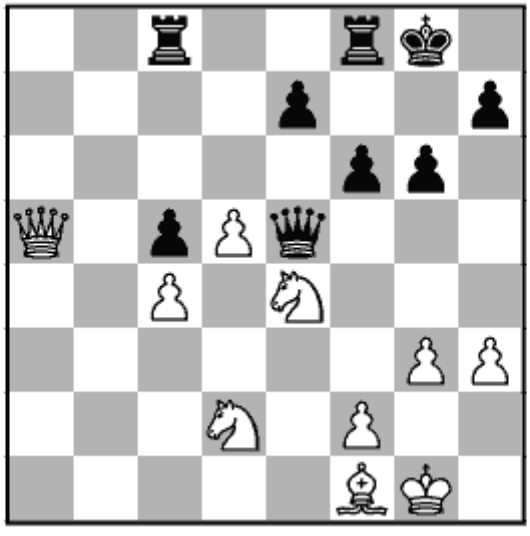


Puzzle 587: Black to play

answer

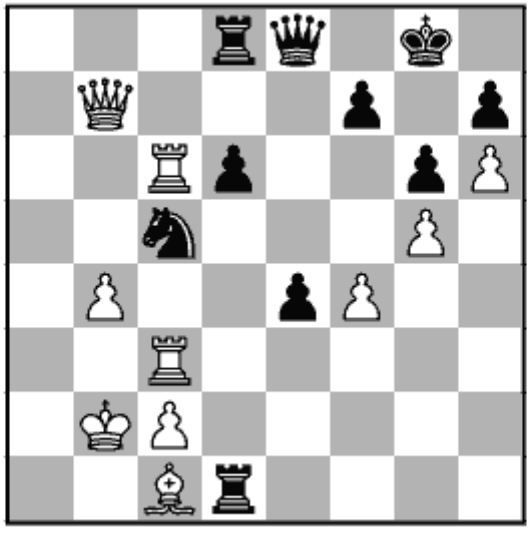
Puzzle 588: Black to play

answer



Puzzle 589: Black to play

answer

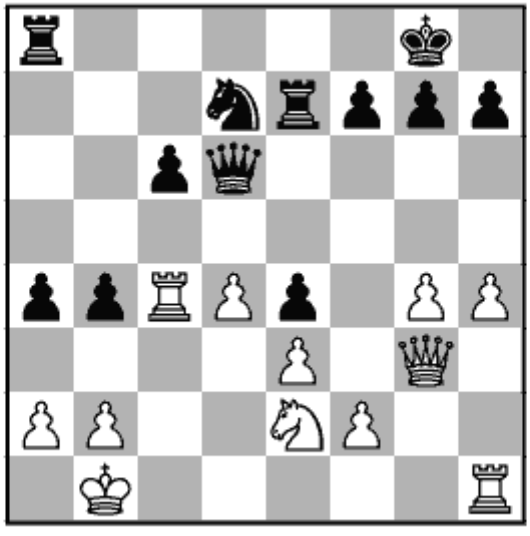


Puzzle 590: White to play

answer

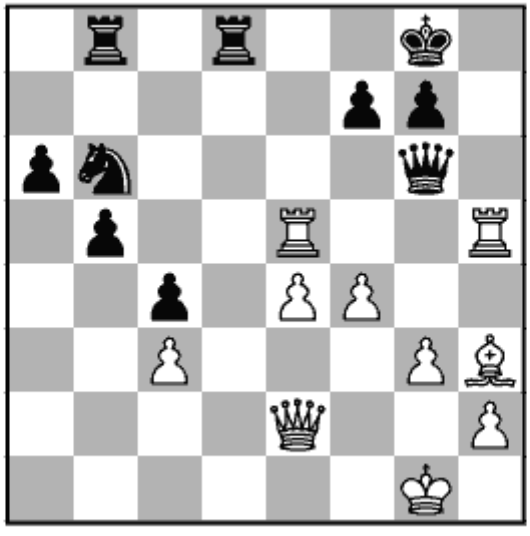
Puzzle 591: Black to play

answer



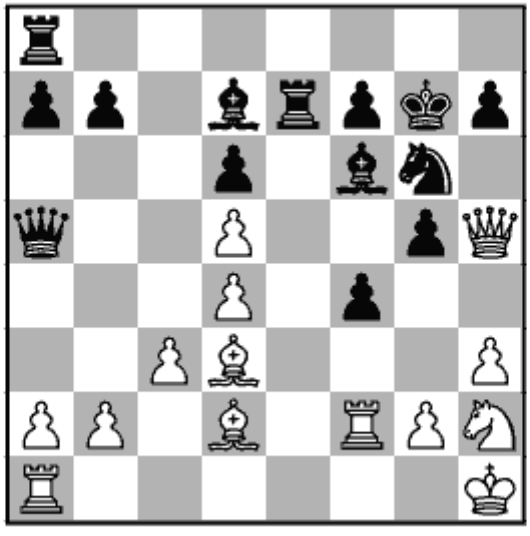
Puzzle 592: Black to play

answer



Puzzle 593: White to play

answer

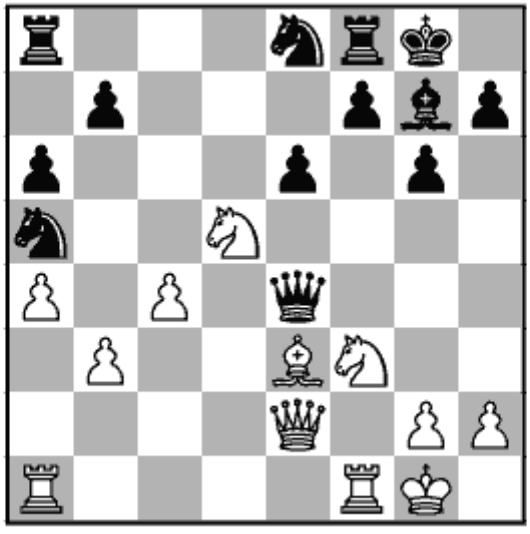


Puzzle 594: White to play

answer

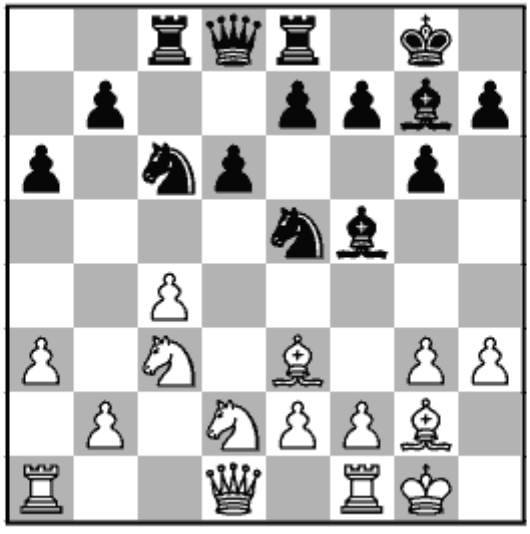
Puzzle 595: Black to play

answer



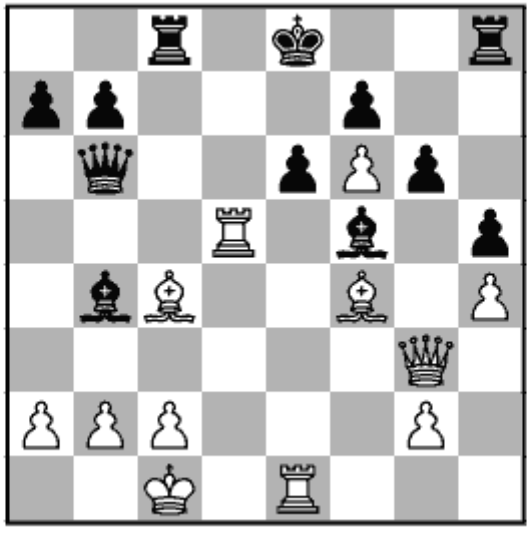
Puzzle 596: White to play

answer



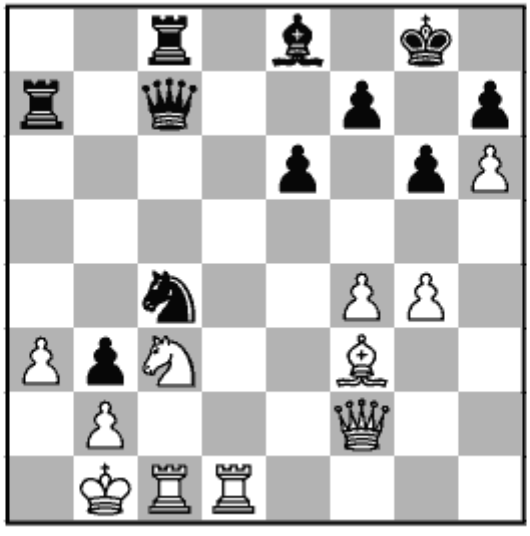
Puzzle 597: White to play

answer



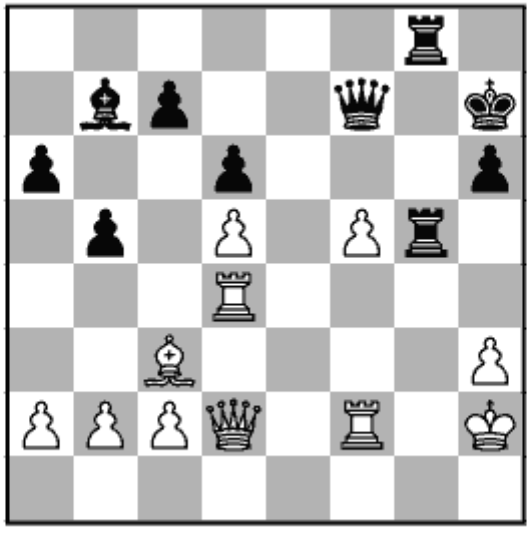
Puzzle 598: White to play

answer



Puzzle 599: Black to play

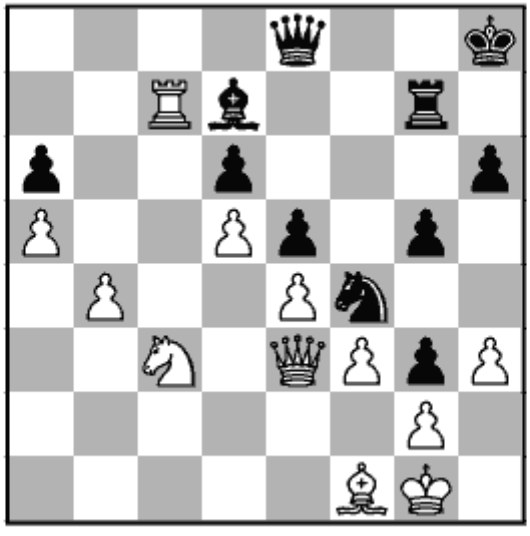
answer



Puzzle 600: Black to play

answer

Solutions for Chapter 11



Solution 558: Black to play

Soysal – Külaots

Stockholm 2018/19

Black's only chance lies in an attack on the h-file.

34…Qh5!

34…g4? loses to 35 fxg4 +– (as played in the game), and not 35 hxg4? Qd8 36 Ra7 Qh4 –+.

35 Qa7

White must avoid 35 Bxa6? Bxh3 –+ and 35 Ra7? Bxh3 36 gxh3 Rxa7 37 Qxa7 Qxf3 –+.

35 Rc6 is a bit of a strange move, but it does not lose: 35… Bxc6 (or 35…g4!? 36 fxg4 Bxg4 37 Rxd6 Bxh3 38 gxh3 g2 with unclear play) 36 dxc6 Qf7 is unclear.

35…Bxh3

Not 35…Nxh3+? 36 gxh3 Qxf3 37 Bg2 Qd3 38 Kh1 +–.

36 Rxg7 Bd7!

Once White's rook is gone, Black will no longer be in danger of being mated as all White will have are queen checks. Not 36…Bf5? 37 Bxa6 +–.

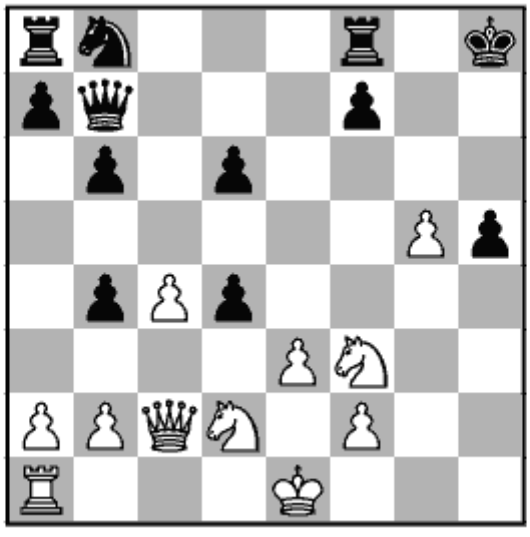
37 Bxa6

37 Rh7+ Kxh7 38 Qxd7+ Kh8 =.

37…Qh2+ 38 Kf1 Qxg2+ 39 Ke1 Kxg7 40 Qxd7+

and the game will end with perpetual check: **40…Kg6 41 Qe8+** (41 Qxd6+ Kh5 42 Qd7 Qf2+ 43 Kd1 g2 =) **41…Kg7 42 Qd7+ Kg6 =**.

back



Solution 559: White to play

Peek – O.Willson

Hastings 2018/19

18 Qf5!

White brings his queen into the attack and at the same time deprives Black of the defensive idea 18…f5.

After 18 Ke2? f5 (as played in the game; 18…dxe3!? is unclear too), 19 Rh1 dxe3 20 Rxh5+ Kg8 leads to unclear play. The same goes for 18 0-0-0? dxe3 19 fxe3 Nd7 (19…f5!?) 20 Qf5 Rae8 (here White has not managed to bring his d2-knight into the attack) 21 Rh1 Kg7 22 Rxh5 Rh8.

18…Qe7

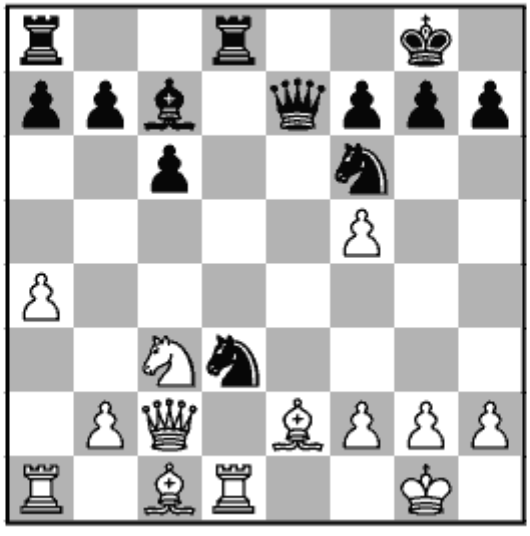
Or: 18…dxe3 19 Ne4! f6 20 g6 +–; 18…Nd7 19 Ne4 (19 Nxd4!?) 19…dxe3 (19…Rae8 20 Nxd6 +–) 20 Nf6 Nxf6 21 gxf6 +–, mating.

19 Nxd4 +–

With the pawn blocked in on f7, Black cannot be saved. For example: **19…Nd7 20 Ke2** (20 0-0-0 +–) **20…Rg8 21 Ne4!**

(the quickest path to victory) **21…Rae8 22 Rh1 Qxe4** (22… Kg7 23 Nf6!? Nxf6 24 gxf6+ Qxf6 25 Rg1+ +–) **23 Rxh5+ Kg7 24 Rh7+**, mating.

back



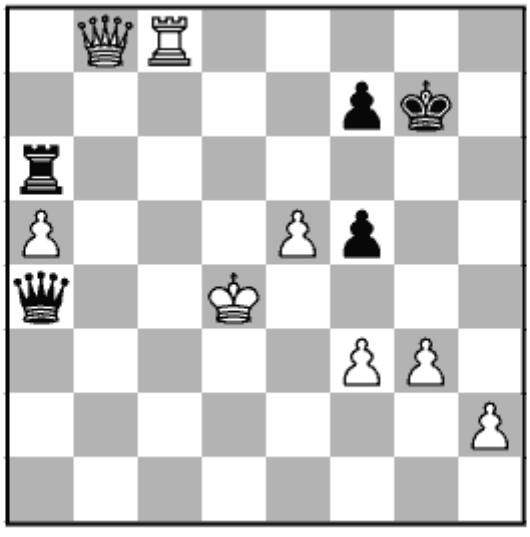
Solution 560: Black to play

Zhang Xiao – Yan Tianqi

Tianjin 2018/19

Sometimes a retreat can prove an effective attacking move. **17…Nb4!** (in the game 17…Nxc1? 18 Raxc1 left White close to equality, while 17…Qe5? 18 g3 Nb4 19 Rxd8+ Bxd8 20 Qb3 =+ also offers Black little) **18 Qb3** (18 Rxd8+ Rxd8 19 Qb3 leads to the same position) **18…Rxd1+ 19 Qxd1 Rd8 20 Qb3** (20 Qf1 Nc2 21 Rb1 Qe5 22 g3 Qxf5 –+) **20…Nfd5 –+** and White does not have time to finish his development. 21 Bf1 is well met by 21…Qe1!, while 21 Nxd5 loses to 21…Qxe2 22 Bg5 Rxd5 since White can't take on b4 due to the back-rank mate.

back



Solution 561: White to play

J.Anderson – T.Villiers

Hastings 2018/19

If White can escape the checks, he will win, but this is easier said than done.

59 Ke3!

59 Kd3? Qd1+ = and 59 Rc4? Qd1+ = offer White nothing.

59…f4+!?

59…Qa3+ 60 Kf4 Qa4+ 61 Kg5!? (it is useful to lure the rook to g6) 61…Rg6+ 62 Kxf5 Qd7+ 63 Ke4 +– and White will simply bring his king to the c-file and shut the black queen out: 63…Qa4+ 64 Ke3 (64 Kd3? Qd1+ =) 64…Qa3+ 65 Ke2 Qa2+ 66 Kd3 Qa3+ 67 Kc2 Qa4+ 68 Qb3 +–.

60 Ke2!

It is important not to let the black queen onto the d-file. That's why 60 Kf2? offers nothing: 60…Qd4+ 61 Kg2 Qd2+ 62 Kh3 Rh6+ 63 Kg4 Rg6+ 64 Kf5 Qd3+ 65 Kxf4 Qd4+ =. In the

game White went astray with 60 gxf4? Qa3+ 61 Ke4 Qa4+ 62 Kf5 Qd7+ =.

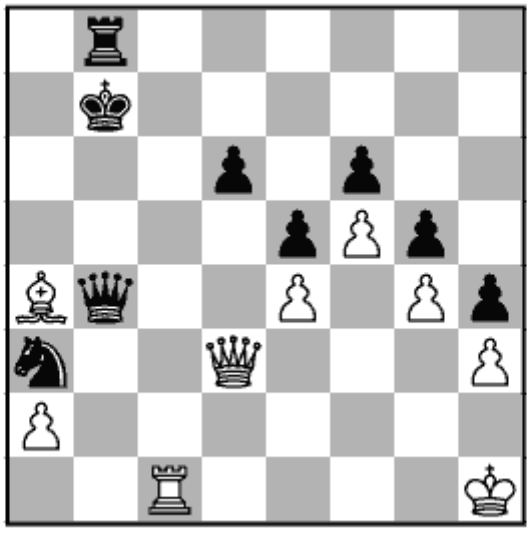
60…Qa2+ 61 Kf1! Qa1+ 62 Kg2 Qa2+ 63 Kh3 Rh6+ 64 Kg4 Rg6+ 65 Kf5

65 Kxf4? Qd2+ =.

65…Qe6+ 66 Kxf4 +–

The checks are over and it's time for Black to resign.

back



Solution 562: White to play

T.Villiers – Midhun

Hastings 2018/19

A precise move puts Black in zugzwang.

40 Bd7!!

Now any legal move by Black decisively worsens his position. White has no particular threat, though if it were his turn to play again in this position, he could still win with the waiting move 41 Qe2! (actually the only move to preserve the win!).

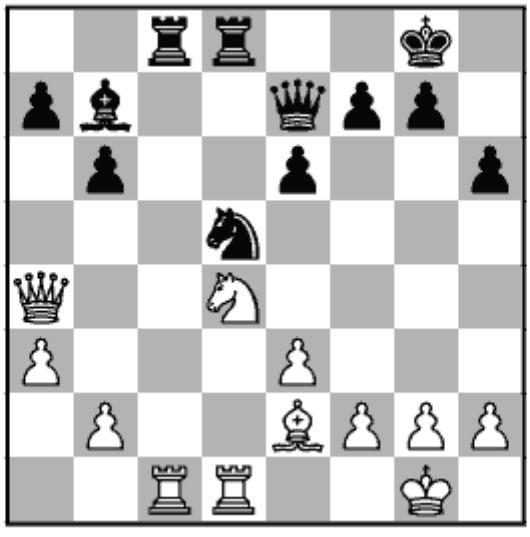
Other moves fail as follows: 40 Qd5+? Ka7 (played in the game) 41 Rc7+ Rb7 =; 40 Bc6+? Ka7 41 Bd5 Rb5 is unclear; 40 Rc3? Qb1+ and with the queens gone, Black is OK.

40…Ka7

Or: 40…Qa5 41 Rc3 +–; 40…Rd8 41 Bc6+ Ka7 42 Qe3+ Kb8 43 Rc3 Qb1+ 44 Kg2 +–.

41 Rc7+ Rb7 42 Qe3+ Ka6 43 Bc8 +–

back



Solution 563: Black to play

N.Mohammad – Tran Tuan Minh

Mumbai 2018/19

With so many white pieces on the queenside, Black has the chance for a lightning strike against the white king.

20…Rxc1 21 Rxc1 Nxe3! 22 fxe3

22 Bf3 Nxg2! (22…Bxf3!? –/+) 23 Bxb7 Nf4 24 Bf3 Qh4 –+ was played in the game, after which White soon resigned.

22…Qg5 23 Kf2 Qxg2+ 24 Ke1 e5!

The last really precise move that Black needs to find. In the following play, he will have several good options.

Not 24…Qe4?! 25 Rc7 e5 26 Rxb7 with chances of a draw, while after 24…Qg5? 25 Rc7! Qxe3 26 Rxb7 Qg1+ 27 Bf1 Rxd4 28 Qe8+ Kh7 29 Rxf7 White is saved as one side or the other will give perpetual check.

25 Nf5 Qg1+ 26 Bf1 Bg2 27 Ng3

27 Qc4 Bh3 –+.

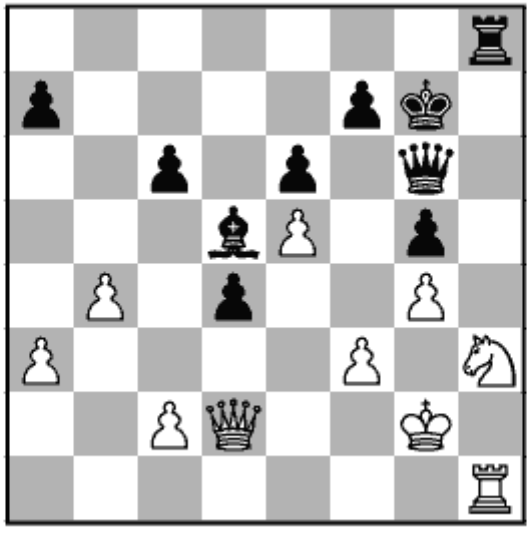
27…Qxe3+

27…Qxh2!? is also good.

28 Ne2 Bxf1 29 Kxf1 Qf3+ 30 Ke1 Qh1+

and Black will win since he has so many pawns for the knight.

back



Solution 564: White to play

Ziatdinov – Deshpande

Mumbai 2018/19

Hopefully you spotted that White can't take on g5 yet.

47 Rh2!

White parries the counter-tactic against f3, and now there is no good way to defend the g5-pawn. In the game White carelessly played 47 Nxg5?? Bxf3+ 48 Kxf3 Rxh1 –+ and was left with a lost position.

Instead both 47 Kg3? f5 and 47 Qxd4? Qxc2+ 48 Kg3 Qe2 49 Qc3 a5! (e.g., 50 bxa5 Rb8) are unclear.

47…f6

47…Rh4 48 Kg3 f6 49 exf6+ +–.

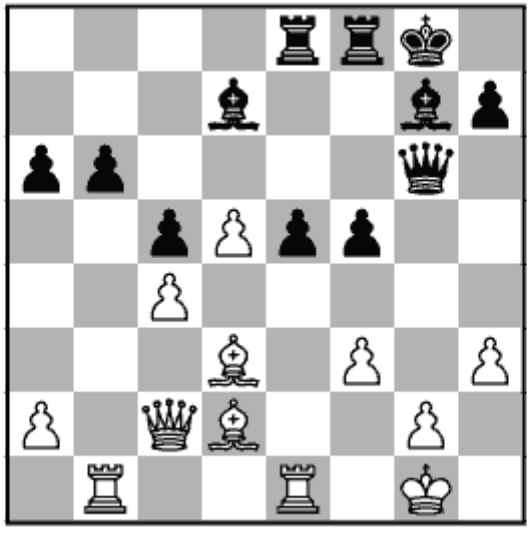
48 exf6+ Qxf6

48…Kxf6 49 Qxd4+ e5 50 Qc5 +–.

49 Qxg5+ Qxg5 50 Nxg5

White has an extra pawn and good chances to win.

back



Solution 565: Black to play

K.Trisha – Kurbonboeva

Mumbai 2018/19

White has a lot of pieces on the b1-h7 diagonal, and Black can take advantage of that.

27…e4!

After 27…Qg3?! 28 Bc3 e4 29 Bf1 exf3 30 Bxg7 White has good chances to resist.

28 fxe4 fxe4

Not 28…Bd4+? 29 Kh1 fxe4 30 Rxe4, when 30…Bf5?? no longer works in view of 31 Rg4 +–.

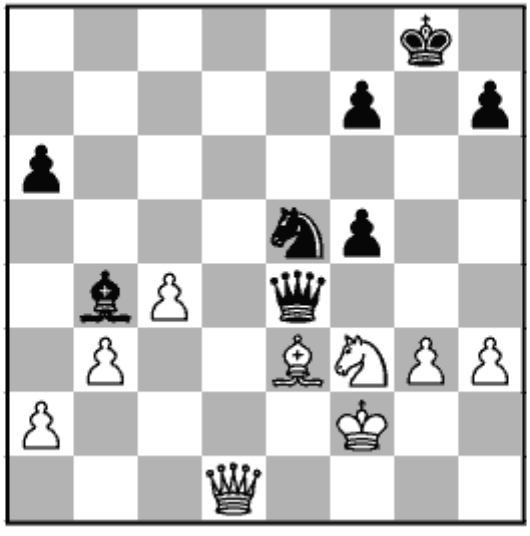
29 Bxe4

29 Rxe4 Bxh3 (29…Bf5!? –+) 30 Bc3 Bf5 31 Rxe8 Bxd3 32 Rxf8+ Bxf8 –+.

29…Rxe4!

White loses because of the loose rook on b1: **30 Rxe4** (30 Qxe4 Bf5 –+) **30…Bxh3** (30…Bd4+!? 31 Kh1 Bf5 –+ was played in the game) **31 Bc3 Bf5 32 Rbe1 Bxe4 33 Rxe4 Bxc3** –+ with an extra piece.

back



Solution 566: Black to play

Salmons – F.Rayner

Hastings 2018/19

To have any hope of survival, Black must look for some type of trick.

34…f4!

34…Nxf3? 35 Qxf3 Qb1 36 Qe2 +– and 34…Nd3+? 35 Ke2 Ne5 36 Qd8+ +– (as played in the game) are no use to Black.

35 Bxf4

35 gxf4 Nd3+ 36 Ke2 Nxf4+ =.

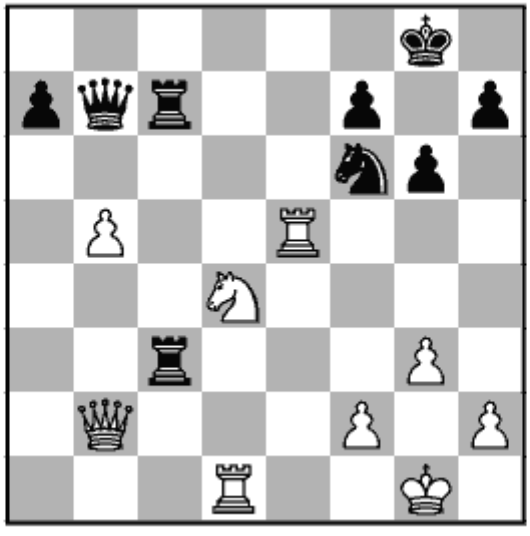
35…Bc5+

Not 35…Nd3+? 36 Kf1 Nxf4 37 gxf4 +/–. 35…Nxf3 36 Qxf3 Bc5+ is a less accurate move-order as it gives White the extra possibility of 37 Be3.

36 Kg2 Nxf3! 37 Qxf3 Qc2+

Black will either give perpetual check or pocket two pawns: **38 Kf1 Qb1+ 39 Ke2 Qxa2+ 40 Bd2 Bb4 41 Qd3 Bxd2 42 Qxd2 Qxb3 =**.

back



Solution 567: White to play

Djurić – Røyset

Hastings 2018/19

White could have won with the help of a beautiful idea.

35 Nf5!!

In the game White missed his chance with 35 h3? and only won after blunders by both sides.

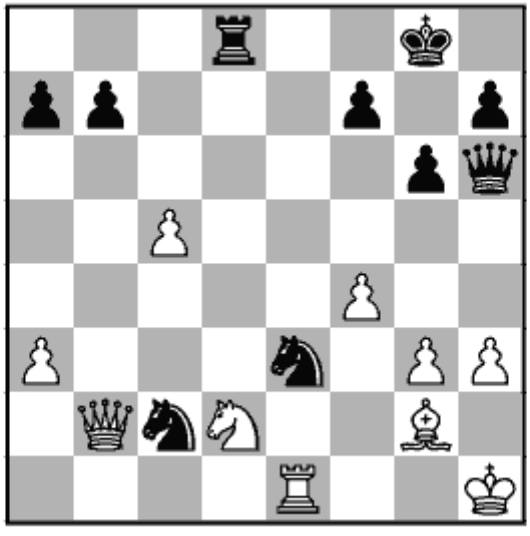
35…gxf5

35…Qa8 36 Re7 gxf5 37 Rxc7 Rxc7 38 Qxf6 +– also gives White a decisive advantage.

36 Qd2!

Suddenly it becomes clear that Black does not have time to defend himself: **36…Ne4** (36…Rc8 37 Qg5+ Kf8 38 Qxf6 +–) **37 Rxe4 Qxe4** (37…f6 38 Qd8+ Kg7 39 Re8 +–) **38 Qg5+ +–**.

back



Solution 568: White to play

Tran Tuan Minh – Puranik

Mumbai 2018/19

Moving the rook loses a pawn, so White needs to look hard for another option.

29 Ne4!

The game featured 29 Re2?! Qh5 30 g4 Qxc5 31 Ne4 (31 Qxb7 Nxg2 –/+) 31…Qd4 –/+, and Black was able to win with his extra pawn.

29…Nxe1

29…Nxg2 30 Nf6+ Kf8 31 Nd7+ Kg8 32 Nf6+ =.

30 Nf6+ Kf8

30…Kh8 31 Nh5+ Kg8 32 Nf6+ =.

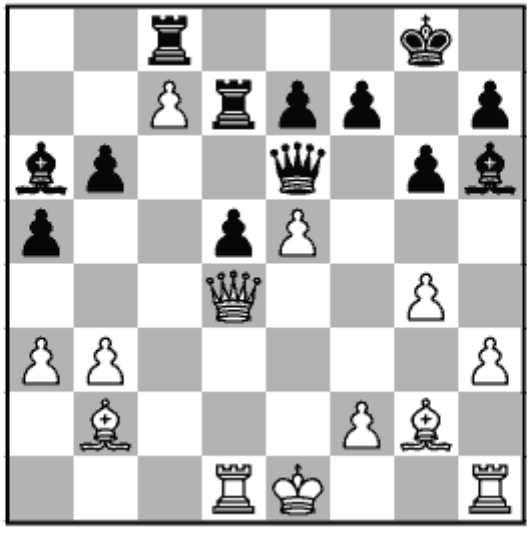
31 Nd7+! Rxd7

Or 31…Ke8 32 Nf6+ Kf8 33 Nd7+ =, but not 31…Ke7? 32 Qf6+ Kxd7 33 Qxf7+ Kc8 34 Qxb7#.

32 Qh8+ Ke7 33 Qe5+

with perpetual check.

back



Solution 569: Black to play

Mont Reynaud – Y.Liou

Burlingame 2019

24…Qc6!

Now White must forget about any ideas of picking up the d5-pawn, and instead tend to his vulnerable king. After 24…Bb7?!, as played in the game, 25 h4 Bg7 26 g5 is unclear. 24…Rcxc7?! 25 Bxd5 Rxd5 26 Qxd5 Qxd5 (26…Rc2 27 Qa8+ is unclear) 27 Rxd5 Rc2 28 Ba1 =+ gives Black the initiative, but no more than a small advantage.

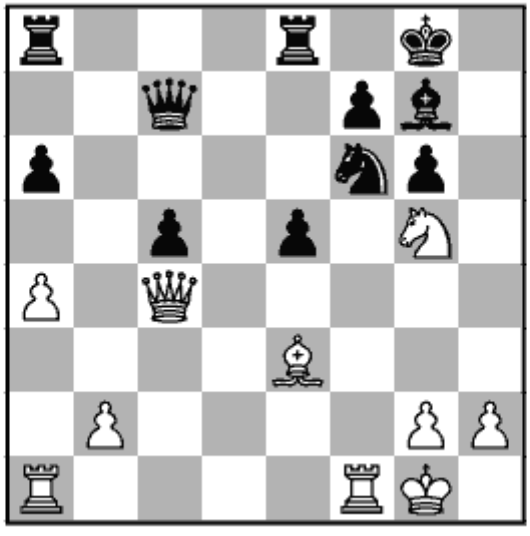
25 Bf1

25 Bxd5?! Qc2 26 Bxf7+ Kf8 –+.

25…Bxf1 26 Kxf1 e6

Black has won a pawn and should win the game too: **27 Kg2 Rdxc7** –+.

back



Solution 570: White to play

V.Karthik – Bick (variation)

Burlingame 2019

29 Qh4!

White threatens to take the knight and bring the queen to h7. And there's nothing Black can do about it.

29…Rad8!?

29…a5 loses to 30 Rac1 +–, while 29…Rab8 can be met by 30 Rac1 +– or 30 Rxf6 Bxf6 31 Qh7+ Kf8 32 Rc1 +–.

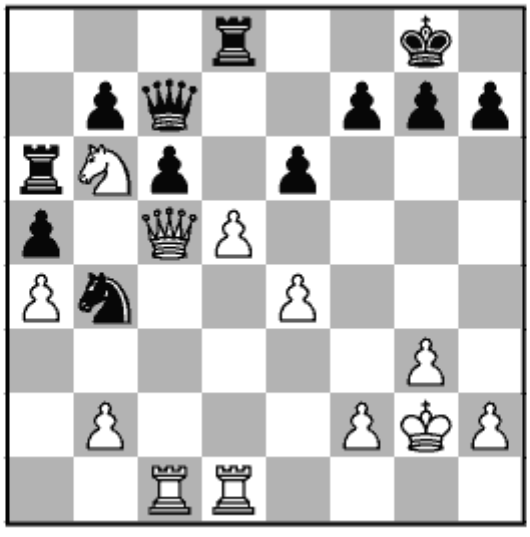
30 Rxf6!

Not 30 Rac1? Rd4 31 Bxd4 exd4 +=.

30…Bxf6 31 Qh7+ Kf8 32 Rf1

With an irresistible attack: **32…Rd6 33 Ne4 +–**.

back



Solution 571: Black to play

Ni Hua – Kravtsiv

Dubai 2012

Black's back rank is weak, so it is worth making some *luft*.

23…h6!

This is far better than: 23…exd5?! 24 Nxd5 Nxd5 25 exd5 +/–; 23…g6? 24 dxe6 fxe6 25 Qg5 +/–; 23…Qxb6? 24 dxe6 Rf8 25 Qxb6 Rxb6 26 e7 Re8 27 Rd8 +–.

24 Rc3

White should avoid 24 dxe6? fxe6 25 Nc4 Nd3 –/+, while 24 f4!? Qxb6 25 dxe6 Rxd1 is equal after 26 Qxb6 Rxb6 27 e7 Rxc1 = or 26 exf7+ Kxf7 27 Qf5+ =.

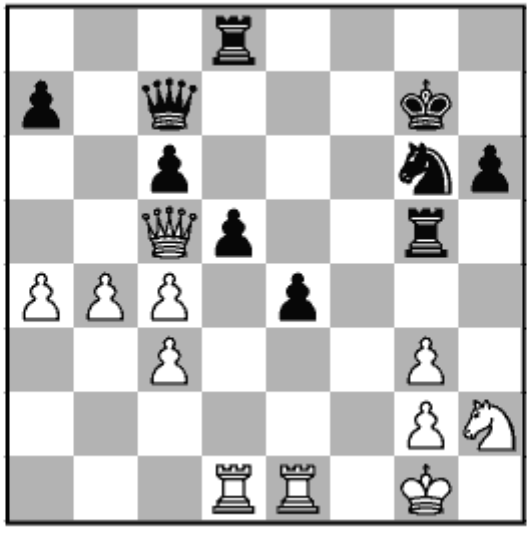
24…exd5

24…f6!? is slightly preferable, with unclear play.

25 Nxd5 Nxd5 26 Rxd5

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 572: White to play

Wang Zijian – Gu Tianlu

Tianjin 2018/19

It is very important to exchange rooks to reduce Black's attacking potential.

29 Rxd5!

Not:

a) 29 Nf1? d4 –+.

b) 29 Qd4+?! Ne5 (29…Kh7?! 30 Rxe4 +/–) 30 cxd5 cxd5 31 Rxe4 dxe4 32 Qxd8 Qxd8 33 Rxd8 Rxg3 and Black can resist thanks to his powerful e-pawn.

c) 29 cxd5? Qxg3 30 Qxa7+ was played in the game. Then 30…Kh8 31 Qf2 (or 31 Qd4+ Ne5 32 Qf2 Qxf2+ 33 Kxf2 cxd5 with counterplay) 31…Qxf2+ 32 Kxf2 cxd5 leaves the position unclear because of Black's play against the exposed king on f2.

29…Rdxd5

29…Qxg3 30 Qxa7+ Kf6 31 Rf1+ +–.

30 cxd5 Qxg3

30…Rxd5 31 Qf2 Qb6 32 Ng4 and White should win.

31 Qxa7+ Kg8 32 Qf2 cxd5

32…Qxc3 33 Rxe4 +–.

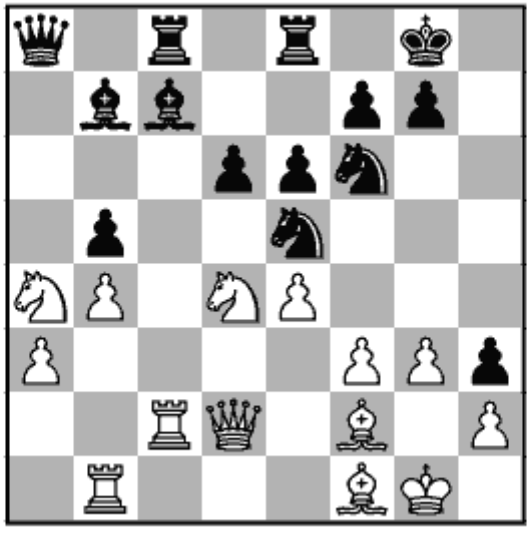
33 Rf1

33 a5!?.

33…Qxf2+ 34 Kxf2 +–

White has an extra pawn and a decisive advantage.

back



Solution 573: White to play

Samant – Vatsal

Mumbai 2018/19

White needs to watch out for sacrifices on e4, and he can't take on b5 as it would leave the g2-square undefended.

25 Rbc1!

Not:

a) 25 Bxb5? Bxe4 (or 25…Nxe4!? 26 fxe4 Bxe4 –+) 26 fxe4 Nxe4 27 Qc1 Nc3 –+ was played in the game.

b) 25 Nc3? Bb6! –+ and Black will soon sacrifice on e4: 26 Qe2 (26 Be2 Bxe4 27 fxe4 Nxe4 28 Nxe4 Qxe4 –+) 26… Bxe4 (26…Nxf3+!? –+) 27 fxe4 Rxc3 28 Rxc3 Nxe4 –+.

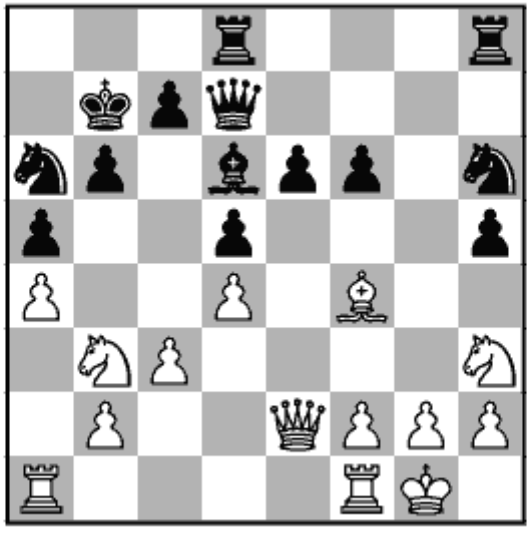
25…Qxa4

25…Bd8 26 Bxb5 Rxc2 27 Qxc2 is unclear, while 25…Nc4 leads to equality: 26 Bxc4 bxc4 27 Rxc4 Qxa4 28 Rxc7 =.

26 Rxc7 Qxa3 27 Qc3

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 574: White to play

Rakshitta – Kl.Varga

Mumbai 2018/19

White wants to attack the e6-pawn, but should first exchange queens.

16 Qb5!

Not 16 Qxh5? Nf5 17 Qe2 Rdg8 =+. After 16 Rfe1?! e5! (16…Rde8? 17 Qb5 +– was played in the game) 17 dxe5 fxe5 18 Bxe5 Rde8 19 f4 White is somewhat better, but the main struggle lies ahead.

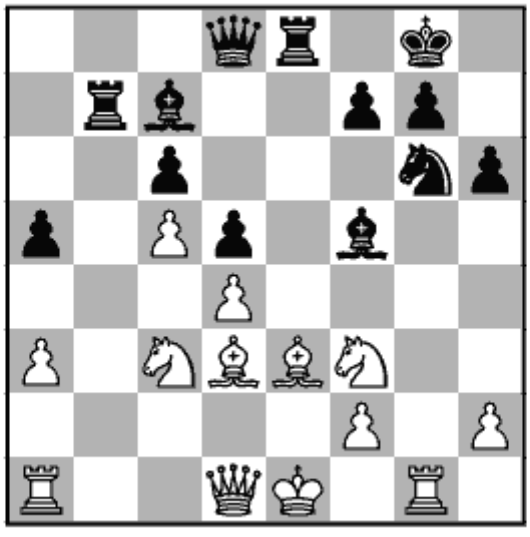
16…Ka7

16…Qxb5 17 axb5 Nb8 18 Rfe1 +–.

17 Qxd7 Rxd7 18 Rfe1

White wins the pawn, and with it the game: **18…Re7 19 Bxd6 cxd6 20 Nf4 +–**.

back



Solution 575: Black to play

J.Watson – A.Grabinsky

Burlingame 2019

Usually it is unprofitable to make exchanges that bring the enemy pieces into play, but that is not the case here.

23…Bxd3!

After 23…Qf6?! (as played in the game) 24 Rb1 Rxb1 25 Bxb1 White has good play.

24 Qxd3 Qf6

Having shifted the queen from d1, Black wins a vital tempo.

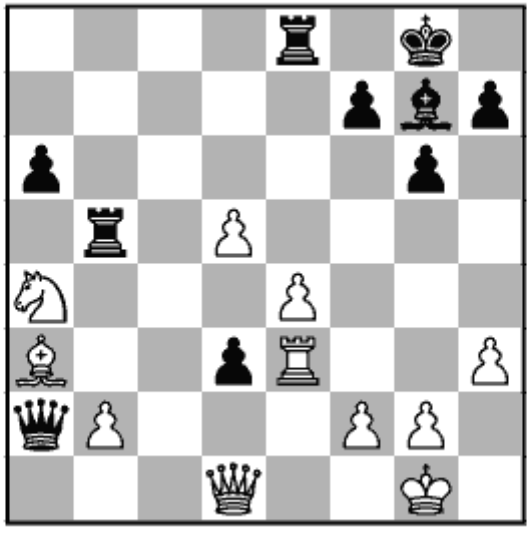
25 Qd1

Even worse is 25 Qe2?! Nf4 26 Qa6 Rb3 –+.

25…Bf4 26 Qe2 Rb3 27 Nd1 a4 –/+

Black has a large advantage thanks to his active pieces. **28 Kf1?!** is met by **28…Qf5**.

back



Solution 576: Black to play

Tran Tuan Minh – Raghunandan

Mumbai 2018/19

It's generally a bad idea to box your own queen in. But every rule has its exceptions…

26…Rb3!

This is better than:

a) In the game, 26…Qc4? 27 Rxd3 Rxe4 28 b3 gave White reasonable compensation for the exchange.

b) After 26…d2? 27 Qxd2 Bh6 28 Nc3 Bxe3 29 fxe3 (29 Qxe3!? also offers compensation) Black will have to return one of his extra exchanges. Then 29…Qa1+?! 30 Kh2 looks suspicious for Black.

27 Rxd3

27 Nc5 is well met by 27…Rxa3! 28 bxa3 Bd4 –+, but 27 d6!? may be a better try: 27…Bd4 28 Rxd3 (28 Rf3 Rd8 29 Rxd3 Rxd3 30 Qxd3 Qa1+ 31 Qf1 Qxf1+ 32 Kxf1 Be5 –+) 28…

Rxd3 29 Qxd3 Qa1+ (29…Rxe4! –+ is powerful but hard to see) 30 Qf1 Qxf1+ 31 Kxf1 Rxe4 and Black should win.

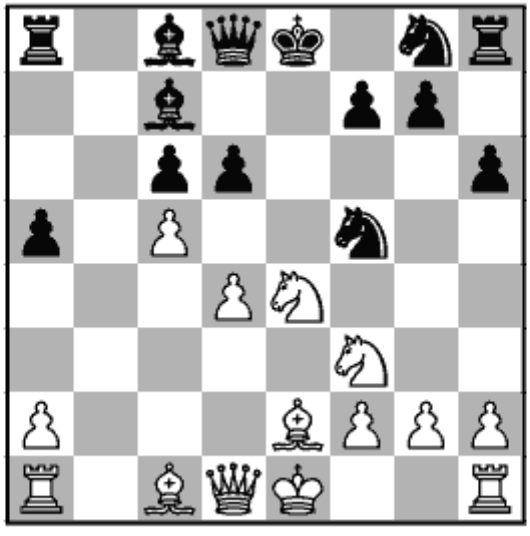
27…Rxd3 28 Qxd3 Qa1+ 29 Kh2

29 Qf1 Qxf1+ 30 Kxf1 Rxe4 –+.

29…Qe1! –+

Black wins one of the pawns and should gradually exploit his extra exchange.

back



Solution 577: White to play

J.Watson – A.Grabinsky (variation)

Burlingame 2019

The black knight on f5 has only one retreat-square, and White can exploit this fact.

16 Qa4!

After 16 0-0?! d5 17 Nc3 Nf6 White is only a little better.

16…Bd7

Or:

a) 16…Nge7 17 g4 d5 18 Nc3 +/– and Black loses a knight.

b) 16…dxc5 17 Ba3 (17 Qxc6+?! Bd7 18 Qxc5 Nge7 allows Black compensation; 17 dxc5!? +/–) 17…Nge7 18 dxc5 0-0 19 Rd1 +/– and Black must either lose the c6-pawn or let the knight into d6.

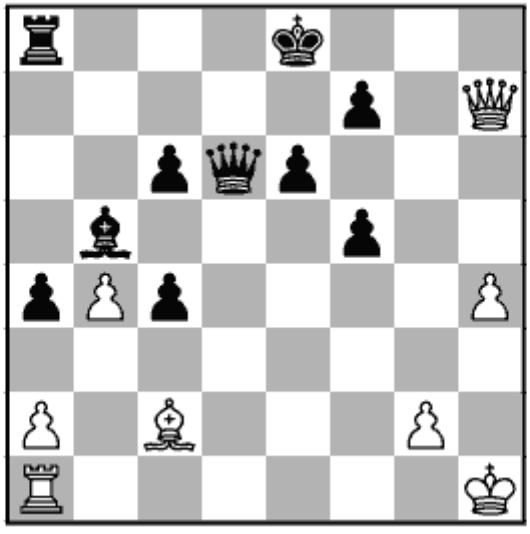
17 cxd6 Nxd6 18 Nc5 Nf6

18…Nb5?! 19 Ne5 Bxe5 20 dxe5 +–.

19 Nxd7 Nxd7 20 Qxc6 +/–

with an extra pawn and a big advantage.

back



Solution 578: White to play

M.Popov – Yan Tianqi

Tianjin 2018/19

If White is to survive, it is vital that he keeps the black pieces bottled up.

33 Qh8+!

In the game White opted for 33 Rd1?. Then:

a) Black replied with 33…Qxb4?, when White could have played 34 Qh8+ Qf8 35 Qf6 =.

b) 33…Qf8! 34 h5 (34 Qh5 Qg7 35 Qf3 Qg4 –+) 34…Ke7 (34…c3!? –+) 35 Bxf5 Qh8 –+ gives Black a decisive advantage.

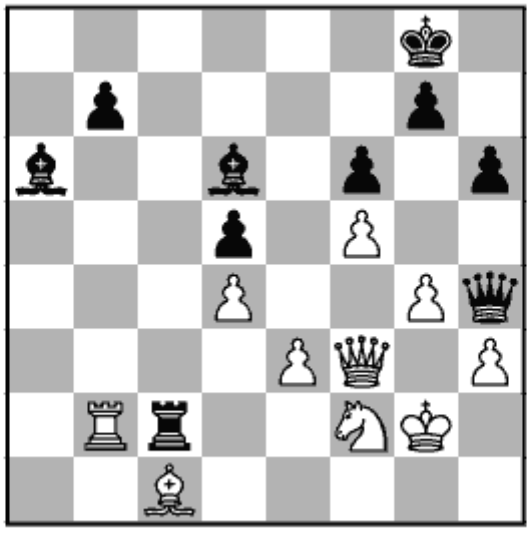
33…Qf8 34 Qf6 Rd8

Or: 34…Qxb4 35 Rd1 c3 36 h5 Qe7 37 Qh8+ Qf8 38 Qf6 =; 34…Kd7 35 Rd1+ Kc7 36 h5 is unclear.

35 h5

White is no worse. The game could end with a repetition after **35…Qe7** (35…Qg8 36 Rd1 is unclear) **36 Qh8+ Qf8 37 Qf6**.

back



Solution 579: Black to play

Ynojosa – Javakhadze (based on)

Burlingame 2019

If Black can drive away the white queen, the king will be left defenceless.

32…Be2!

Not 32…Rxb2? 33 Bxb2 =+, while 32…Rxc1? 33 Qxd5+ Kh7 34 Qxd6 is unclear.

33 Qxd5+

Or 33 Qxe2 Rxe2 34 Rxe2 Qg3+ 35 Kf1 Qf3 –+.

33…Kh7

33…Kh8 is also good.

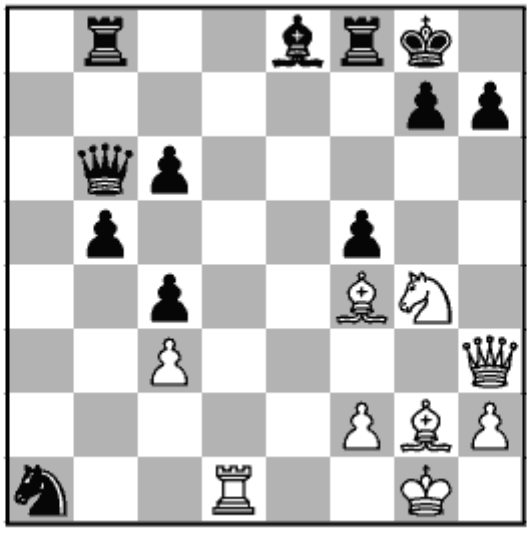
34 Qxd6 Bf1+!

Rather than 34…Bf3+? 35 Kxf3 Qxf2+ 36 Ke4 =, when the king has broken free from its prison.

35 Kh1 Qxf2 36 Rxc2 Qxc2 –+

Black has an extra piece.

back



Solution 580: White to play

C.Wheeler – Polgar-Shutzman

Burlingame 2019

Given Black's material advantage, White's only hope is an attack on the king.

25 Nh6+!

Not 25 Ne5? Nb3 –+, or 25 Qg3? fxg4 26 Bxb8 Nb3 –+ (as played in the game).

25…gxh6

Or 25…Kh8, and then:

a) 26 Be5!? Rd8! (26…Nb3? allows 27 Rd7 Bxd7 28 Qg3, mating) 27 Rxa1 =+.

b) With 26 Qh4 White brings his queen into the attack, threatening 27 Qe7. Then 26…Bg6 (26…Nb3? 27 Qe7 +–; 26…Rb7? 27 Rd8 +–) 27 Bxb8 Qxb8 28 Bxc6 is unclear.

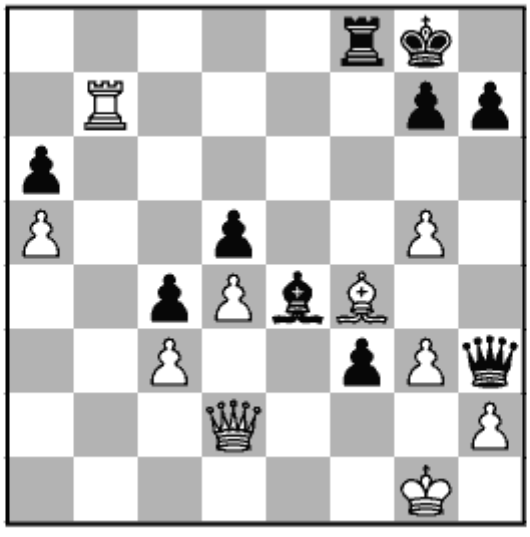
26 Qg3+ Bg6

Not 26…Kf7? 27 Bxb8 (27 Bxh6!? +–) 27…Rg8 (27…Nc2 28 Bf3 +–) 28 Qe5 +–.

27 Rd6!

White is no worse since Black can't prevent a sacrifice on g6. For example: **27…Rf7** (no better is 27…Rb7 28 Bxc6 Rg7 29 Bd5+ Bf7 30 Bxf7+ +=) **28 Rxc6** (or 28 Rxg6+!? hxg6 29 Qxg6+ Rg7 30 Qe6+ with perpetual check) **28…Qd8 29 Bxb8 Qd1+ 30 Bf1 Qg4** with a playable and roughly equal position.

back



Solution 581: Black to play

Akash – Subhayan (variation)

Mumbai 2018/19

The first move is not so hard to find, but the follow-up needs to be worked out carefully.

45…Rxf4!

After 45…Bd3? 46 Qf2 White is OK. Black gains nothing from 46…Rxf4!? 47 gxf4 Qg4+ 48 Kh1 Qxf4 49 h4, with unclear play.

46 gxf4 Qg4+ 47 Kf2

47 Kf1 Bd3+ 48 Kf2 Qg2+ 49 Ke3 Qxd2+ –+.

47…Qg2+ 48 Ke3 Qf1!

The sole route to victory. Black wants to play 49…f2 and deliver mate on d3. After 48…Qg1+ 49 Qf2 Qc1+ 50 Qd2 Black can return to the right path with 50…Qf1!.

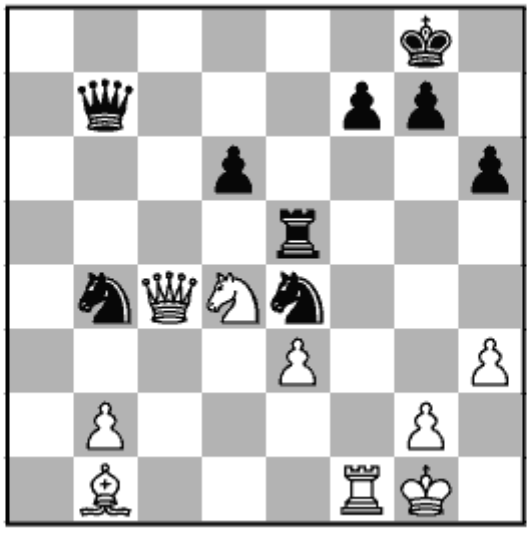
49 Rb8+

Or: 49 Rb2 f2 –+; 49 f5 Qg1+ 50 Kf4 f2 –+.

49…Kf7 50 Rb7+ Ke8 51 Rb8+ Kd7 –+

It’s time for White to resign.

back



Solution 582: White to play

Kochavi – K.Larsen

Stockholm 2018/19

At first glance the position seems equal, but accurate play would have brought White close to victory.

29 Nf5! Nd2

Other moves are worse: 29…h5?! 30 Rd1!? d5 31 Bxe4 dxe4 32 Nd6 +–; 29…d5? 30 Bxe4 Rxe4 31 Qc3 f6 32 Nd6 +–.

30 Qg4

30 Qh4? Nxb1 is unclear.

30…Rxf5 31 Rxf5!

White needed to see this idea before putting the knight on f5. Not 31 Qxf5? Nxf1 =.

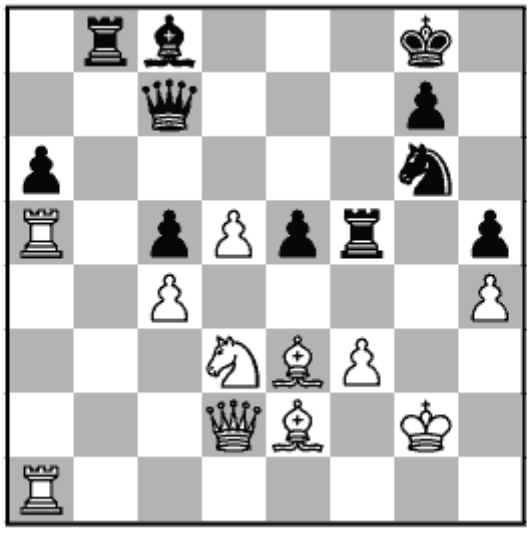
31…Nxb1 32 Qe2!

Soon White will take the b1-knight. The most Black can get for it is one pawn. 32 Rf2?! Nd3 33 Rc2 g5! is less clear.

32…Qe4 33 Rf4 Qd3 34 Qxd3 Nxd3 35 Rf1 +/–

White has a large advantage, although Black can still hope to fight for a draw.

back



Solution 583: Black to play

Nepal – Triton

Mumbai 2018/19

Black must open the b8-h2 diagonal to bring his queen into the attack.

30…e4!

After 30…Nxh4+? 31 Kf2 (as played in the game) the position is completely unclear. For example, 31…Qf7 (not 31…e4? 32 Bf4 +–) 32 f4!? exf4 33 Bxc5.

31 fxe4

31 Rh1!? may offer more practical hope of survival, although Black will win back the knight and have an attack 'for free'. 31…exd3 32 Bxd3 (32 Rxc5 Qf7 and now 33 Bxd3 Rxf3 –+ or 33 Qxd3 Bd7 –+) 32…Nf4+ 33 Bxf4 Rxf4 and with no material to compensate for his weak king, White is losing. 34 Raa1 Bg4! –+.

31…Nxh4+ 32 Kh1 Qg3 33 Ne1

33 Bf1 Rxf1+! 34 Rxf1 Bg4 with irresistible threats: 35 Raa1 Bf3+ (or 35…Nf3 –+) 36 Rxf3 Nxf3 –+.

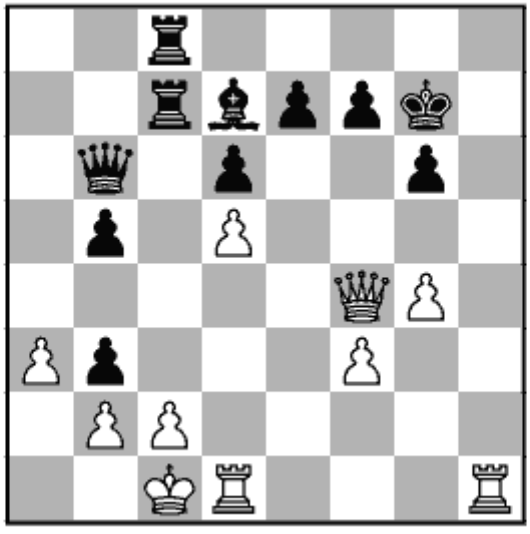
33…Rb2! 34 Qxb2

34 exf5 Rxd2 (or even 34…Bxf5 –+) 35 Bxd2 Bxf5 –+.

34…Qh3+ 35 Kg1 Qxe3+ –+

with mate in a few moves.

back

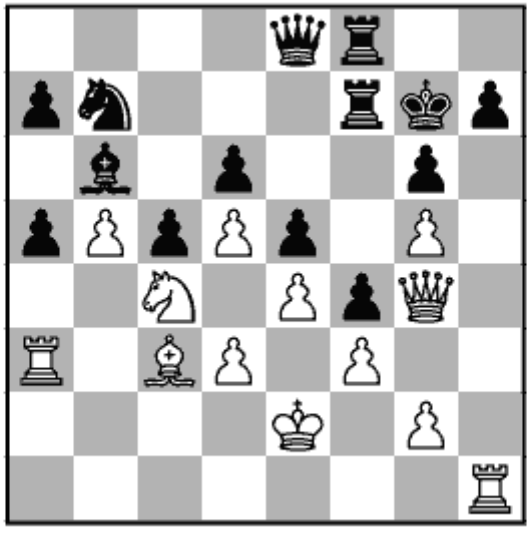


Solution 584: White to play

Training position

White has some false paths to sidestep, so you needed to calculate well. **22 Qh6+** (avoiding 22 Rh7+? Kxh7 23 Qxf7+ Kh6 24 g5+ {24 Rh1+? Kg5 –+} 24…Kxg5 25 Qxe7+ Kf5 = and 22 c3? Rxc3+!? 23 bxc3 Rxc3+ 24 Kb2 Qe3, which is unclear) **22…Kf6 23 g5+** (after 23 Qh4+ Kg7 White should transpose to the main line with 24 Qh7+ {not 24 g5?? Qe3+ 25 Kb1 bxc2+ 26 Ka2 Qe5! –+} 24…Kf6 25 g5+ Kxg5 26 Rdg1+) **23…Kf5** (23…Ke5? loses to 24 f4+) **24 Qh3+ Kxg5 25 Rdg1+!** (after 25 Qh4+? Kf5 26 Rd4?! {26 Qe4+ Kf6 =} 26…Rxc2+ 27 Kb1 Qxd4 28 Qxd4 R2c4 Black is even better, as 29 Qg7 is well met by 29…Kf4 30 Qh6+ Ke5 31 Qe3+ Kf6 32 Qxb3 Rd4) **25…Qxg1+!** (the only way to keep fighting, as 25…Kf6? 26 Qh4+ is hopeless for Black: 26…Ke5 {26…Kg7 27 Rxg6+! fxg6 28 Qxe7+ Kg8 29 Qh7+, mating} 27 Qxe7+ and now 27…Kxd5 28 Rd1+ or 27…Be6 28 Rg5+) **26 Rxg1+ Kf6 27 Qh4+ Kg7 28 c3** +/– and White is much better, but Black retains some drawing chances.

back



Solution 585: White to play

Rathnakaran – Nikhil

Mumbai 2018/19

An unconventional sacrifice leads to a comfortable victory for White.

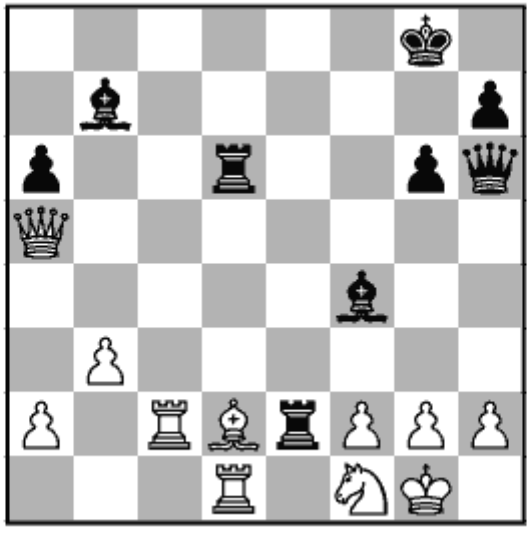
40 Nxd6!

In the game White missed this chance, but won anyway after Black failed to fortify d6. Not 40 Bxa5?! Nxa5 41 Nxa5 Qxb5 42 Nc4 +=.

40…Nxd6 41 Qe6!

Black's basic problem is that his king is blocked by his rooks: **41…Nxb5** (or: 41…Kg8 42 Bxe5 Nf5 43 exf5 +–; 41…Qxe6 42 dxe6 Rb7 43 Bxe5+ +–; 41…Nf5 42 Bxe5+ Kg8 43 exf5 +–) **42 Bxe5+ Kg8 43 Qxg6+** (43 Rxh7 +–) **43…hxg6 44 Rh8#**.

back



Solution 586: Black to play

K.Chan – Krishna Teja

Stockholm 2018/19

The clump of pieces in the centre initially looks confusing, but the decision should not have been too difficult.

34…Qh4! 35 Qc5 Rd4!

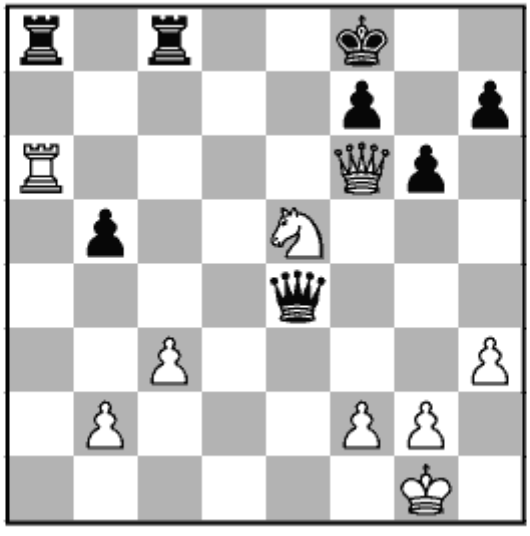
Now White will lose his queen or be mated. In the game Black played 35…Rd5?, when 36 Qa7! would have left matters unclear.

36 Qxd4

Or: 36 Be3 Qg4 –+; 36 Ng3 Bxg3 (or 36…Bxd2 –+) 37 hxg3 Qe4 –+.

36…Bxh2+ 37 Nxh2 Qxd4 –+

back



Solution 587: Black to play

Saksham – Prraneeth

Mumbai 2018/19

Black needs to drive the king to h2 before defending against White's mate threat. This will enable him to give perpetual check in the critical line.

33…Qb1+!

33…Qd5? loses to 34 Nc6 +–, while after 33…Qf5? (as played in the game) 34 Qh8+ Ke7 35 Nc6+ White wins easily: 35…Kd7 (35…Ke6 36 Na7+ +–; 35…Rxc6 36 Rxa8 +–) 36 Qd4+ Ke8 (36…Kc7 37 Qb6+ +–) 37 Rxa8 Rxa8 38 Qh8+ +–.

34 Kh2 Qf5 35 Qh8+ Ke7 36 Nc6+ Rxc6!

Now it becomes obvious why it was important to give the check on b1. It's a draw after **37 Rxa8 Qf4+ 38 Kg1 Qc1+ =**.

back

Solution 588: Black to play

Spanton – S.White

Hastings 2018/19

Black must remove the f4-bishop to break through to the white king.

13…Rxf4!

Black loses after 13…e5? 14 Bg5 Qd6 (this was played in the game; 14…Qb6 15 Qd2 Be6 16 h3 +–) 15 Be4! d4 16 Qd3 +–.

14 Kxf4 h5!

Even with a free move, White will have no way to safeguard his king. Not 14…e5+? 15 Kg3 +–.

15 Qd2

It is important that after 15 Kg3?! Qd6+ 16 Kh4 Black has 16…Ne3! 17 Rxe3 Qf4+ 18 Kxh5 Bd7!, when White must seek a way to survive, such as 19 Bg6! Qh6+ 20 Kg4 Qxg6+ 21 Kh4 Qh6+ =+.

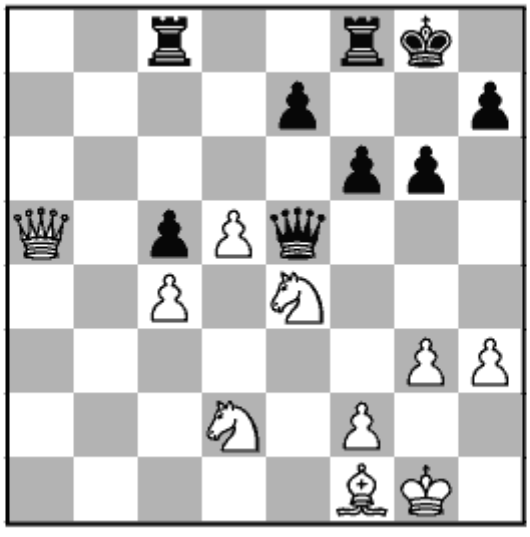
15…Qd6+

Or 15…Qc7+ 16 Kg5 Qd8+ =.

16 Kg5 Qe7+ 17 Kf4 Qd6+ =

with a repetition of moves.

back



Solution 589: Black to play

Bates – B.Derakhshani

Hastings 2018/19

Passive defence is no help to Black; he must find some sort of trick.

35…Ra8!

Not: 35…Qc7? 36 Qc3! Qb6 37 h4 +–; 35…Qd4? (as played in the game) 36 Qb6 Kh8 37 Qe6 f5 38 Ng5 Qf6 39 Qe3 +–.

36 Qxc5

With the queens gone after 36 Qc3 Qxc3 37 Nxc3 f5, Black is no worse since the white pieces lack space: 38 Kg2 Rfb8 39 Nb5 Kg7.

36…Ra2!

Black has counterplay, since the threat of 37…f5 will cost White one of his knights.

37 Qe3

37 Qb4 Rb8 38 Qc5 f5 is unclear, while 37 f4 Qb2 also leads to unclear play after 38 Qxe7 Qd4+ 39 Kh1 Rxd2 or 38 d6 exd6 39 Qxd6 f5.

37…f5 38 f4 Qb2 39 Nc3 Qxd2 40 Qe6+ Rf7 41 Nxa2 Qxa2

White is no worse thanks to his strong c-pawn, but he will not be able to advance it very far. **42 c5** can be met by **42…Qa3**.

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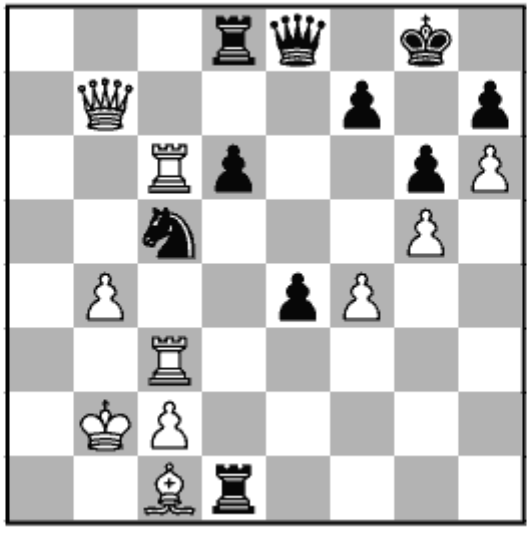


Solution 590: White to play

B.Thipsay – Surendran (based on)

Mumbai 2018/19

White can win because the black king is pinned down on its back rank due to the h6-pawn. **50 bxc5!** (not 50 Qb5? Rb8 51 R6xc5 dxc5 52 Qxe8+ Rxe8 –/+) **50…Rb8 51 Qxb8 Qxb8+ 52 Rb6** (not 52 Rb3? Qf8!, when White cannot advance his pawn, while exchanges on d6 leave Black with enough control of the critical square b8, so the white rooks can't cause havoc on Black's back rank) **52…Qc7** (or 52…Qe8 53 c6 +–) **53 Rcb3!** (after 53 Rxd6? Rxd6 54 cxd6 Qb6+ 55 Ka2 Qa5+ 56 Ra3 Qd5+ 57 Kb1 {57 c4 Qxc4+ =} 57…Kf8 = Black succeeds in evacuating his king) **53…dxc5 54 Rb7! Qa5 55 R3b5** +–. Black loses his queen or is mated.

back

Solution 591: Black to play

Chen Fan – Sethuraman

Tianjin 2018/19

Before taking the e5-pawn, Black should force the white bishop to retreat from e3 so that it cannot occupy the d4-square.

15…Qg5!

Other moves are worse:

a) 15…fxe3? 16 Bd3 exf2+ 17 Kf1 +–.

b) The game featured 15…Bxe5?! 16 Bd4 Qg5 17 Qf3 with unclear play.

c) After 15…dxe5?! 16 Bc1 Qe7 17 b4 the knight will not reach c5 so White is OK: 17…Nf6 18 Qf5.

16 Bd3

There's nothing better. After the bishop leaves e3, Black will take on e5 and play …Rae8: 16 Bd2 Ncxe5 17 Bf1 Rae8 with a decisive advantage, or 16 Bc1 Ncxe5 –/+.

16…Qh6 17 Bd2

17 Bc1 Nc5 –/+.

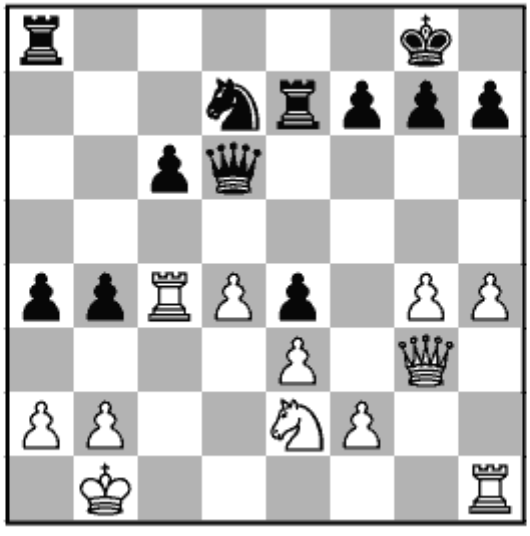
17…Nc5

Or 17…Ncxe5!? –/+.

18 Qe2 Nxd3 19 Qxd3 Nxe5 –/+

Black has a big advantage thanks to the half-open g-file. A good reply to **20 Qf1** is **20…Rf7** and putting the other rook on g8.

back



Solution 592: Black to play

R.Prajesh – R.Shah

Mumbai 2018/19

If Black exchanges queens or moves his queen aside, then he will lose a pawn.

23…Ne5!

23…Qxg3? 24 Nxg3 +/– was played in the game, while 23… Qd5? 24 Rxb4 +/– is no improvement.

24 Rc5 f6!

It is a rare case where the opponent cannot make any real use of such a pin.

25 g5

Or 25 Nc1 Re6 =, while after 25 Rhc1 Rd7 White must avoid 26 dxe5? Qd3+ –/+.

25…Rd7! 26 Nf4

26 gxf6 Nd3 is unclear, while White can keep just a slight plus with 26 Nc1!? Nf3.

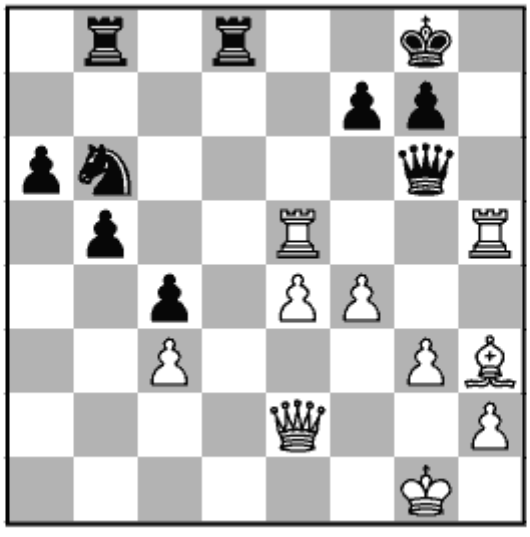
26…Nd3 27 Nxd3 Qxg3 28 fxg3 exd3 29 gxf6

29 Rd1 fxg5 with unclear play.

29…Re8!

with a roughly equal position.

back



Solution 593: White to play

Praveen Kumar – Vatsal

Mumbai 2018/19

White wins with the help of a beautiful combination.

45 Reg5!

This better than:

a) 45 Rh4?! (as played in the game) should be met by 45… Na4, when 46 Reh5? Kf8 is unclear, but 46 Kf1! Nxc3 47 Reh5!, while messy, may still offer White some winning chances.

b) 45 Rhg5?! Qh6 46 Rxg7+! Kxg7 47 Rh5 Qc6 48 Qg4+ Kf8 49 Qg5! (49 Qh4?! Rd1+ 50 Bf1 Rc8 is unclear) 49…Rd1+ 50 Bf1 Ke8 and White can pick up the rook on b8, but Black retains good drawing chances.

45…Qd6

Or: 45…Qf6 46 e5 +–; 45…Qc6 46 Qg4 (46 e5!? +–) 46…g6 47 Qh4 Rd1+ 48 Bf1 +–.

46 Rxg7+! Kxg7 47 Qg4+ Kf8 48 Qh4!

Now Black's king cannot escape, so he must give up his queen. Not 48 Rh8+? Ke7 49 Qg5+ Qf6 50 Qc5+ Qd6 =, or 48 Qg5? Qd1+ 49 Bf1 Ke8 =, when there is no rook check on e5.

48…Qd1+ 49 Bf1 Qxh5

49…Ke8 50 Re5+ +–.

50 Qxh5 +–

White's powerful central pawns render Black's game completely hopeless.

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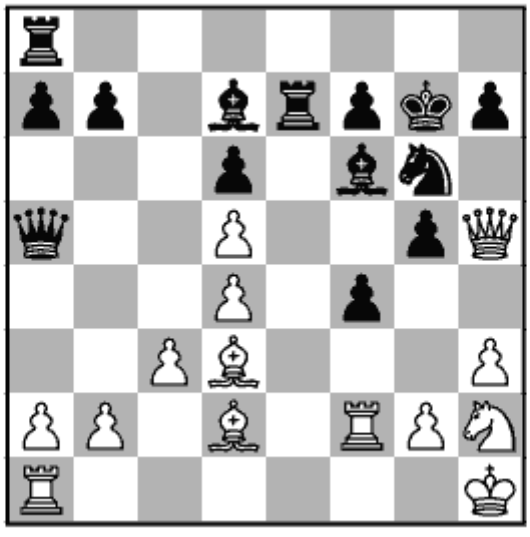

Solution 594: White to play

Divya – Pranav

Mumbai 2018/19

Rather than worrying about the d5-pawn, White should start vigorous kingside play.

22 h4!

In the game White chose the tempting 22 b4?! but after 22… Qa3! (and not 22…Qxd5? 23 Bxf4 +–) the position would have been completely unclear. 22 Ng4?! Bxg4 23 Qxg4 Qxd5 is also unclear, while White should definitely avoid 22 c4? Qb6 –/+.

22…h6

22…gxh4 23 Rxf4 +–.

23 Ng4! Bxg4 24 Qxg4

Unlike the line after the immediate 22 Ng4?!, here White threatens h5.

24…Qxd5 25 h5 Nh4 26 Bxf4 +–

with a decisive advantage.

back

Solution 595: Black to play

Pranesh – Prraneeth

Mumbai 2018/19

To defend successfully, Black must make several precise moves.

23…Bf8!

The game featured 23…f6? 24 Rh3 Bf8 25 Qxg6 Qg7 (25…fxe5 26 Bg5 +–) 26 Qxf6 +–.

24 exd6 Bxd6

Rather than 24…Rxd6? 25 Be5+ Kg8 26 Qf4 Qd8 27 Nd4 +/–.

25 Bg5 Kg8!

Black needs to appreciate that his powerful bishops will provide good compensation for the exchange.

After 25…Bf8? 26 Qh4 Black does not have time to move his rook because of the threats on the h-file, viz. 26…Rd5 27 Rh3 h5 28 g4 +–. And giving up the exchange now will let the

white knight occupy d4: 26…Kg8 27 Rh3 f5 28 Bxd8 Rxd8 29 Nd4 +–.

26 Bxd8

After 26 Rh3 f5 (26…f6!?) 27 Bxd8 Rxd8 Black has compensation, while 26 Bf6 Bf8 27 Qh4 Bg7 is unclear.

26…Rxd8 27 Rh3 f5

Now the rook serves no purpose on h3, and it isn't clear that White has any advantage at all.

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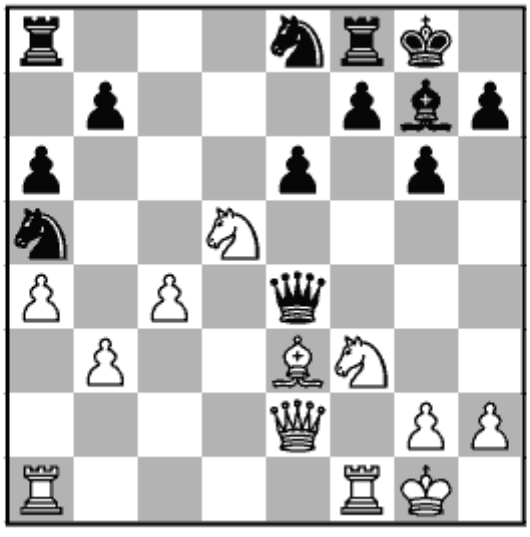


Solution 596: White to play

Harmon-Vellotti – D.Johnston

Burlingame 2019

A few accurate moves enable White to win.

20 Ne7+!

After 20 Ng5? Qe5 21 Ne7+ Kh8 (as played in the game) 22 Rae1 Bf6! 23 Qg4 Ng7 24 Qh4 h5 White retains some attacking chances, but the game is unclear.

20…Kh8 21 Rad1!

Black's queen is in great danger on e4, and there's no defence against all of White's threats:

a) 21…Nxb3 22 Ng5 +–.

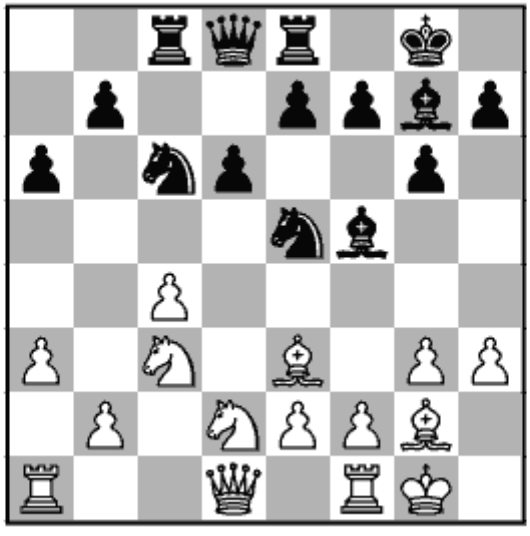
b) 21…f5 22 Rd4!? (22 Ng5 +–) 22…Bxd4 23 Bxd4+ Ng7 24 Qb2 +–.

c) After 21…Qg4 White has several ways to win, including the attractive 22 h3 (22 Qe1!? +–) 22…Qg3 (22…Qh5 23 b4

Nc6 24 Nxc6 bxc6 25 Bc5 +–) 23 Ng5 Nf6 24 Rxf6! Bxf6 25 Ne4 +–.

d) 21…h6 22 Rd4! Bxd4 23 Bxd4+ +– and White wins.

back



Solution 597: White to play

Praveen Kumar – A.Gandhi

Mumbai 2018/19

In this calm-looking position, White can suddenly trap a piece.

16 f4!

In the game White missed his chance, playing 16 Nd5?.

16…Bh6

Or 16…Nd7?! 17 g4 Be6 18 f5 +–.

17 g4

17 Bf2?! Nd7 18 b4 +/– is unpleasant for Black, but he hasn't lost any material.

17…Bxg4

17…Nxg4 18 hxg4 Bxg4 19 Nd5 +–.

18 Nd5!

The immediate capture on g4 is wrong because it leaves the e3-bishop as a problem: 18 hxg4? Nxg4 19 Nd5 e6 is unclear.

18…Be6

18…e6 19 fxe5 +–.

19 Bb6!?

The most accurate move, although taking on e5 is probably also good enough: 19 fxe5 Bxe3+ 20 Nxe3 Nxe5 +/–.

19…Qd7 20 Kh2

with a decisive advantage. There's no rush to take the knight, and **20…Bg7** is well met by **21 Qb3!?**.

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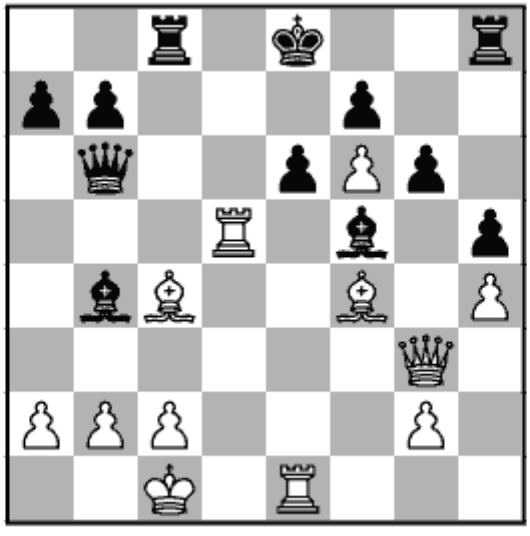

Solution 598: White to play

Kravtsiv – Usmanov

Pardubice 2012

Tempo-gaining moves prevent Black from finishing his development.

22 Be3!

22 Bb5+? Kf8 23 Bc7 Bxe1 24 Qa3+ Kg8 25 Bxb6 exd5 is unclear.

22…Bxe1 23 Qxe1 Qc7

23…0-0 is ruled out by 24 Rxf5 Qc6 25 Rf4 +–.

24 Rc5! Qb8 25 Rxc8+ Qxc8 26 Qb4 Qc7 27 Bxa7

Black's king is stuck in the centre, and his position is hopeless.

27…Kd7

27…Be4 28 Bb5+ Bc6 29 Bb6 Qd7 30 Qa3 +–.

28 Bb6 Qf4+ 29 Kb1 Qe5 30 Bb5+ Kc8 31 Qa5 Qd6

31…Be4 32 Bd7+ +–.

32 Qa8+ Qb8 33 Qa4 Qd6 34 Bd7+ 1-0

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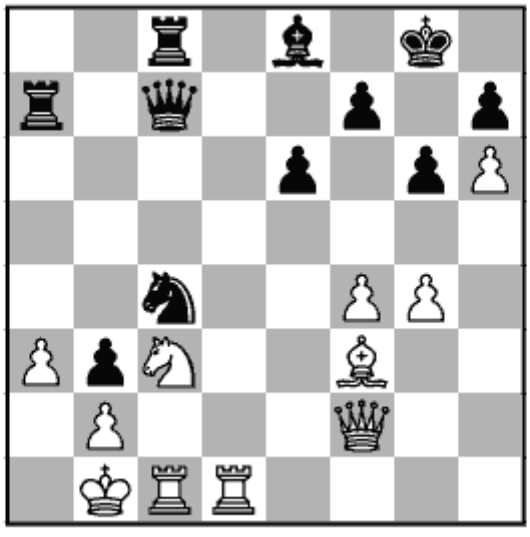

Solution 599: Black to play

Kravtsiv – T.Coleman

Pardubice rapid 2012

The right idea is easy enough to find, but you needed to calculate the variations well.

32…Rxa3!

The game featured 32…Qxf4? 33 Qxa7 Qxf3 34 Qd4 and White soon won.

33 bxa3 Nxa3+

33…b2? lets White keep the game unclear with 34 Qxb2 Rb8 35 Na4 Rxb2+ 36 Nxb2 Nxa3+ 37 Ka2.

34 Kb2

34 Ka1 is met by 34…Qa5 35 Kb2 Nc4+ –+.

34…Nc4+ 35 Kb1

Or 35 Kxb3 Rb8+ 36 Kc2 Rb2+ –+.

35…b2!

Black need not settle for perpetual check and can play for the win.

36 Qxb2

After 36 Rc2 Rb8 –+ White can't defend against the check on a3. Useless is 37 Nb5 Bxb5.

36…Rb8!

36…Nxb2? 37 Nd5 is unclear.

37 Na4

37 Qxb8 Qxb8+ 38 Kc2 Ne3+ –+.

37…Bxa4 38 Rxc4 Rxb2+ 39 Kxb2 Qb8+!

Black will take the d1-rook and win: **40 Kc1 Bxd1 –+**.

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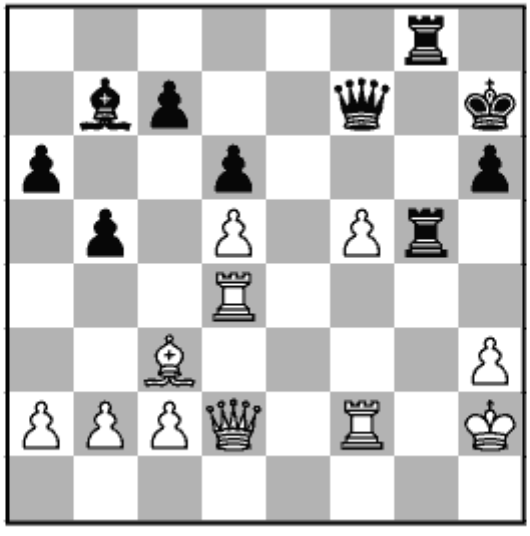

Solution 600: Black to play

Calzetta Ruiz – J.Wallace

Stockholm 2018/19

Black would like to activate his light-squared bishop by playing …c5, but this idea needs to be prepared.

33…b4!!

The immediate 33…c5? runs into 34 dxc6 Bxc6 35 f6! since this pawn is so powerful that White can give up his queen:

a) 35…Rg2+ 36 Rxg2 Rxg2+ 37 Qxg2 Bxg2 38 Rg4! is unclear.

b) 35…Rg1 36 Qd3+ Kh8 37 Re4! keeps the game balanced.

c) 35…Rg3 36 Qe2 is unclear since unlike the line following 33…b4!! 34 Rxb4!?, here the black bishop isn't blocking access to e7, so 36…Bd7? fails to 37 Rd3 +–.

In the game Black played 33…Qh5??, losing to 34 Re4!.

34 Bxb4

34 Rxb4!? Bxd5 35 f6 is trickier, and Black must reply accurately to win: 35…Rg3! (only by taking aim at the h3-pawn can Black create irresistible threats; instead both 35… Qg6? 36 f7! and 35…Rg2+? 36 Rxg2 Rxg2+ 37 Qxg2 Bxg2 38 Rg4 are unclear) 36 Qe2 (36 Rh4 Qg6 –+) 36…Be6 37 Rh4 Qg6 –+.

34…c5 35 dxc6 Bxc6

White has no chance of surviving here since on b4 the bishop cannot create counter-threats against the black king.

36 Rxd6

Or:

a) 36 Rh4 Qf6!? –+.

b) 36 f6 has several good answers, including 36…Rg1, when 37 Qd3+ Kh8 38 Re4 (compare note 'b' to Black's 33rd move) 38…Qg6 (which would lose with the bishop on c3) is now an easy win for Black.

c) 36 Qe2 Rg1 –+ (36…Rg2+!? –+) 37 Re4 Qd5 38 Re7+ R8g7 –+.

36…Rg2+ 37 Rxg2 Rxg2+ 38 Qxg2 Bxg2 39 Kxg2 Qb7+ –+

Black wins comfortably.

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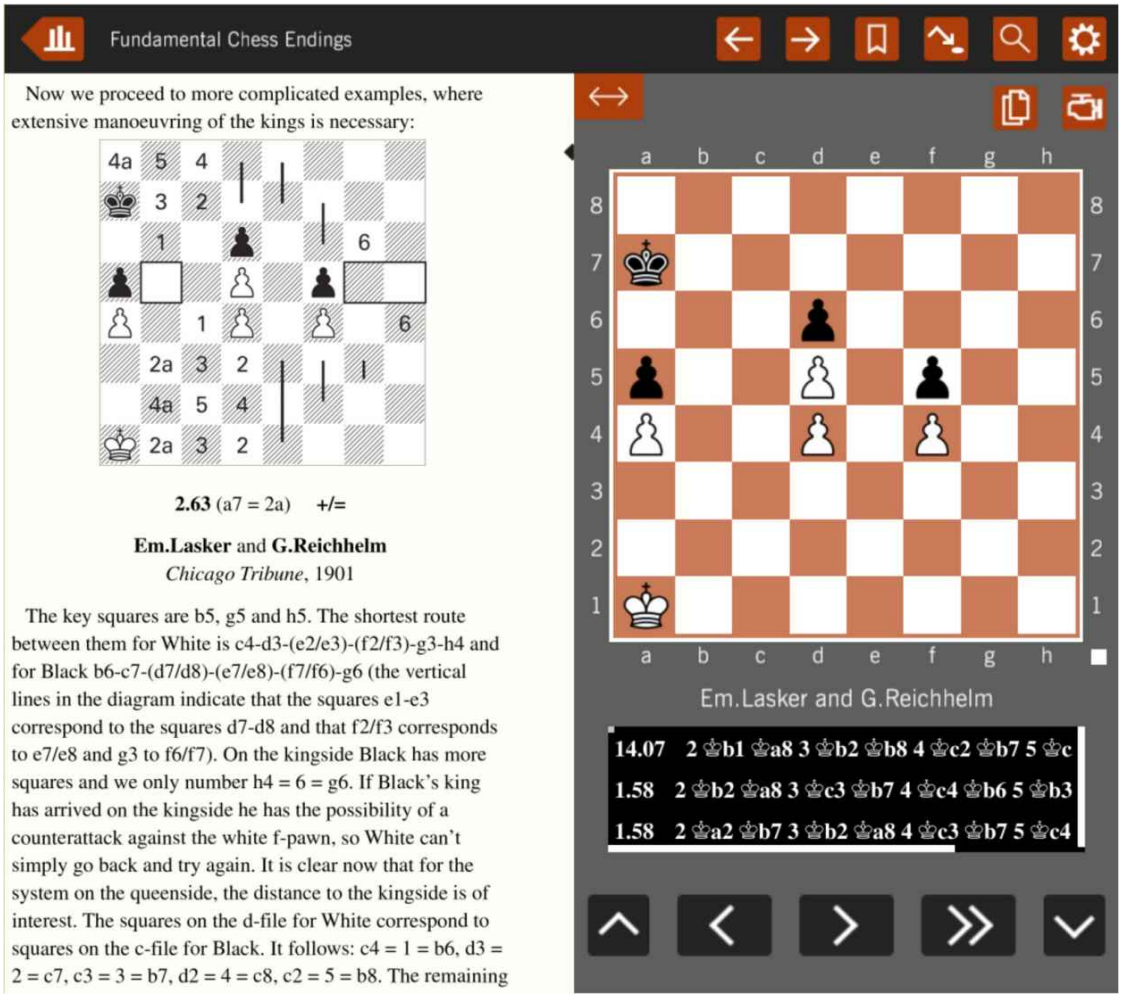
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Now we proceed to more complicated examples, where extensive manoeuvring of the kings is necessary:
2.63 (a7 = 2a) +/=
Em.Lasker and G.Reichhelm
Chicago Tribune, 1901
The key squares are b5, g5 and h5. The shortest route between them for White is c4-d3-(e2/e3)-(f2/f3)-g3-h4 and for Black b6-c7-(d7/d8)-(e7/e8)-(f7/f6)-g6 (the vertical lines in the diagram indicate that the squares e1-e3 correspond to the squares d7-d8 and that f2/f3 corresponds to e7/e8 and g3 to f6/f7). On the kingside Black has more squares and we only number h4 = 6 = g6. If Black's king has arrived on the kingside he has the possibility of a counterattack against the white f-pawn, so White can't simply go back and try again. It is clear now that for the system on the queenside, the distance to the kingside is of interest. The squares on the d-file for White correspond to squares on the c-file for Black. It follows: c4 = 1 = b6, d3 = 2 = c7, c3 = 3 = b7, d2 = 4 = c8, c2 = 5 = b8. The remaining
Em.Lasker and G.Reichhelm
14.07 2 ♔b1 ♔a8 3 ♔b2 ♔b8 4 ♔c2 ♔b7 5 ♔c
1.58 2 ♔b2 ♔a8 3 ♔c3 ♔b7 4 ♔c4 ♔b6 5 ♔b3
1.58 2 ♔a2 ♔b7 3 ♔b2 ♔a8 4 ♔c3 ♔b7 5 ♔c4

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Paul van der Sterren

This just has to be the perfect single-volume survival guide. All openings are covered, with detailed verbal explanations of plans for both sides.

The first moves of a chess game define the nature of the whole struggle, as both players stake their claim to the critical squares and start to develop their plans. It is essential to play purposefully and to avoid falling into traps or reaching a position that you don't understand. This is not a book that provides masses of variations to memorize. Paul van der Sterren instead offers a wealth of ideas and explanation, together with the basic variations of each and every opening. This knowledge will equip players to succeed in the opening up to good club level, and provide a superb grounding in opening play on which to build a more sophisticated repertoire. The strategies he explains will, unlike ever-changing chess opening theory, remain valid as long as chess is played, and so the time spent studying this book will be rewarded many times over.

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"The format of the book is very friendly, openings very clearly set out and identified, with the variations touched upon in short and sweet sections" – John Lee Shaw, CHESS CHECK (e-zine)

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Karsten Müller and Frank Lamprecht

This is the first truly modern one-volume endgame encyclopaedia. It makes full use of endgame tablebases and analytical engines that access these tablebases; where previous authors could only make educated guesses, Müller and Lamprecht have often been able to state the definitive truth, or get much closer to it. Covers all major types of endgame, featuring rules of thumb, thinking methods, principles, practical advice, and much more.

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"The authors love the endgame phase of the game and this shows in the writing. … Anyone reading it will seriously improve their game." – British Chess Federation Book of the Year Award press release

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Graham Burgess

A good opening repertoire need not require an enormous amount of study to be highly effective. A cunning choice of lines and move-orders can steer the game to positions that we like and deny the opponent his preferred strategies. The main cornerstones of this repertoire are carefully chosen Queen's Gambit lines, the Torre Attack (vs …e6), and a variety of fianchetto options against the King's Indian and related set-ups. White's position is kept highly flexible, with many possible transpositions to a wide variety of systems that the reader can use to extend and vary the repertoire. The book features a wealth of new ideas and original analysis.

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"This is the way opening books should be written. It is a training repertoire book which you can use to build a solid white repertoire for your career. It is not a 'hope they make a mistake and fall for the trap' book. Best value if you want to learn to play the opening like a grandmaster." – Danny Woodall, Amazon.com review

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In this major four-volume work, Watson explains not only the ideas and strategies behind specific openings, but also the interconnections of chess openings taken as a whole. By presenting the common threads that underlie opening play, he provides a permanent basis for playing openings of any type. Volume 1 offers both entertainment and challenging study material in king's pawn openings such as the Sicilian and Ruy Lopez.

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John Watson

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"Watson has managed to present the most important openings after 1 d4 and analyses them in detail as well as explaining the backgrounds. … you have the feeling you are holding a real classic in your hand. It may sound exaggerated, but I believe Watson is a sort of modern Aron Nimzowitsch. Absolutely recommended!" – Martin Rieger, WWW.FREECHESS.DE

Mastering the Chess Openings Volume 3

John Watson

In the third volume of his highly acclaimed series, Watson moves on to flank openings. He provides in-depth coverage of the English Opening, while drawing upon many themes from the first two books. Particularly in the context of reversed and analogous forms of standard structures, we understand why certain ideas work and others don't, and experience the concept of 'Cross-Pollination' at work in even more varied forms than seen in earlier volumes.

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"This volume can be read separate from the other two in this series; however, I recommend reading all three books. They will truly take your game to the next level and help you understand the opening phase so much better, as well as help minimize the risk of starting the game out from an inferior position. Those who play the English Opening should buy this book without any hesitation. This book is a modern classic. It is genuinely instructive and provides numerous examples of original analysis and improvements over existing theory." – Carsten Hansen, CHESSCAFE.COM

Mastering the Chess Openings Volume 4

John Watson

This final volume draws together many themes in a wide-ranging discussion of general opening topics. In the process, Watson covers a variety of opening structures and variations not seen in the earlier volumes and presents a great wealth of original analysis. He also explains how players should best prepare and choose their openings for the level at which they play. The final topics are the future of chess openings and the skills that will be most important as chess evolves in the forthcoming decades.

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“The section on gambit play is extremely well done and must reading for any player coming up through the ranks. So too is the following chapter ‘Choosing and Preparing Openings’ which is pure gold. Watson gives well-considered suggestions for appropriate openings for players from just beyond beginner to 2300 that will solve many amateurs’ perennial headache. Highly Recommended” – IM John Donaldson, US Team Captain

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"Johnsen has chosen to build on the first edition, addressing the areas where theory has substantially changed or Summerscale's original coverage needed expanding. Offers a nice mix for the player who doesn't like to study theory too much but still wants a chance to come out of the opening with chances for an advantage" – IM John Donaldson, US Team Captain

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Murray Chandler

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"As a teacher of scholastic/junior players, I have long wished for a comprehensive yet brief and inexpensive guide to chess tactics. Finally a work that fills the bill" – Bill Whited, CHESS COUNTRY

Attack with Black

Valery Aveskulov

Need a reliable way to fight for the initiative when White plays 1 d4? Grandmaster Aveskulov presents a sound but ultra-aggressive repertoire based on gambits that have proved their worth in grandmaster play over many years. The Benko Gambit offers Black very active piece-play and intense positional pressure. If White dodges the Benko, we hit him with the Blumenfeld, sacrificing a pawn to set up a strong pawn-centre. Aveskulov examines all of White's options and move-orders after 1 d4 Nf6.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"This isn't like previous books on the Benko … this book has the real strength of taking the total Black approach in hand. Anyone looking to fill out a full defense to 1 d4 would do well to pick this up." – Bill McGeary, WWW.CHESSVILLE.COM

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Graham Burgess

Solving chess puzzles is one of the most effective ways to improve your game. This convenient book provides 300 exercises, with instructive points highlighted in the solutions.

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“There are several things a successful book on tactical puzzles should have. They include examples that are not well-known, material arranged not by theme but by degree of difficulty and perhaps most importantly solutions that are detailed enough to explain to the student why they went wrong. Burgess passes all these tests with flying colors.” – IM John Donaldson, US Team Captain

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Murray Chandler

This chess puzzle super-challenge contains 100 fun positions to solve, ranging from encouragingly easy to mind-numbingly hard. Using an innovative format, every puzzle is preceded by an instructive example, illustrating an important pattern. *Chess Puzzles for Kids* will quickly enable children to enjoy using their new-found skills to outwit friends and relatives.

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"Grandmaster Murray Chandler writes excellent books for kids who already know how to play. … presents the mating and tactical patterns in such a clear and entertaining way that it is a joy to read it." – GM Lubosh Kavalek, HUFFINGTON POST

Understanding Pawn Play in Chess

Dražen Marović

Chess owes its extraordinary depth to pawns. These humble pieces can take on many roles in the chess struggle. They can be blockers, battering-rams, self-sacrificing heroes, and can even be promoted to the ranks of royalty. Marović investigates high-quality games to provide the reader with an armoury of pawn-play concepts that will help him make the right judgements at the board.

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"GM Marović utilizes all his experience as a GM and trainer to outline appropriate strategies associated with specific pawn-structures: isolated pawns (specifically IQP), isolated pawn couples, hanging pawns, passed, doubled and backward pawns, pawn-chains and pawn-islands. This approach … has of course been attempted before, but not, that I have seen, with such clarity as in this book" – Jonathan Tait, BCCA

The Most Amazing Chess Moves of All Time

John Emms

Very occasionally, a chess move is played that astonishes the whole world. It may be a move of astounding complexity, unearthly beauty, deep paradox… or all three. The move is discussed and analysed around the world as chess-players attempt to fathom both why the move works, and how on earth anyone thought of it in the first place. In this book John Emms has selected, from hundreds of candidates, the 200 most amazing chess moves of all time. In each case, the reader is given the chance to try to find the move for himself – making this one of the most challenging chess puzzle books ever published.

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"…you are getting double value for money – a wonderful games collection and a 'find the continuation' complication. A really enjoyable and instructive book." – Alan Sutton, EN PASSANT

A Rock-Solid Chess Opening Repertoire for Black

Viacheslav Eingorn

Grandmaster Eingorn shows that it is possible both to play solidly, and to take White out of his comfort zone. The repertoire, based on playing 1…e6, is strikingly creative and will appeal to those who want a stress-free life as Black. You will get every chance to demonstrate your chess skills, and are very unlikely to be blown off the board by a sharp prepared line. Eingorn's subtle move-orders are particularly effective if White refuses to pick up the gauntlet, as Black can then use his delay in playing …Nf6 to good effect and take the fight directly to his opponent.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"…shows depth of reading and balanced research. … A pleasure to recommend this little gem of a book. … Perhaps the best book of 2012 so far. A creative effort." – James Pratt, British Chess Magazine

Understanding Chess Middlegames

John Nunn

The middlegame is the phase of the chess battle where most games are decided, yet is the one that has received the least systematic treatment from chess writers. With the outstanding clarity for which he is famous, Nunn breaks down complex problems into bite-sized pieces. Each of the 100 lessons features two inspiring examples from modern chess, with a clear focus on the key instructive points.

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"I own several books on the Middlegame in chess written by esteemed Grandmasters but this one is probably my favourite. John Nunn knows his subject; he is three-times World Chess Solving Champion" – Carl Portman, CARLSPLANET.CO.UK

Understanding the Chess Openings

Sam Collins

A comprehensive guide to all important chess openings. There is coverage of all major variations, and helpful descriptions and explanation of the typical strategies for both sides.

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"Anyone rated under 1700 should own this book and even higher rated players who are looking to fill in the blanks in their repertoire can benefit. It arms you with the knowledge of where to focus your resources when investing money on other opening books." – Carsten Hansen, CHESSCAFE.COM

The Ultimate Chess Puzzle Book

John Emms

This book provides a wealth of puzzle positions to test just about every facet of your tactical skills. The book begins with 100 relatively easy positions suitable for novices, and ends with 100 extremely tough puzzles, which provide a mind-bending challenge even for top-class players. There are 1001 puzzles in all.

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"The material is well chosen, and a marking system enables you to assess your performance relative to masters and grandmasters" – Leonard Barden, EVENING STANDARD

Chess for Zebras

Jonathan Rowson

An insight into human idiosyncrasies, in all phases of the game. The reader will begin to appreciate chess at a more profound level, while enjoying a book overflowing with common sense and humour.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"I warmly recommend the book, especially to players frustrated by a long period of stagnation. Most chess books attempt to change what we think, but Rowson's helps us to change how we think, and in the long run, that's what will pay the biggest dividends" – Dennis Monokroussos, CHESS TODAY

Understanding Chess Move by Move

John Nunn

Thirty modern games are examined in depth, to help the reader understand the most important aspects of chess and to illustrate modern chess principles in action. Virtually every move is explained using words that everyone can understand.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"This is a great book from one of the best chess writers in the world. He does a fine job explaining the plans 'move by move' so everybody can understand what it's all about" – Søren Søgaard, SEAGAARD REVIEWS

365 Ways to Checkmate

Joe Gallagher

Tactics based on checkmate ideas against the enemy king decide a large proportion of chess games, so it is vital to be alert to these possibilities when they occur. Joe Gallagher provides 365 checkmate puzzles to help readers sharpen their skills. In each position, the task is to find a way to force a clear-cut win.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"One of the things that makes this a good book is Gallagher's skill at selecting examples and placing them at the right level of difficulty. Another is offering detailed solutions which often cover plausible sidelines that might have attracted the reader." – IM John Donaldson, JEREMYSILMAN.COM

1001 Deadly Checkmates

John Nunn

The ability to spot checkmates is a vital skill – and this easy-to-use book shows you how it is done. With the help of Grandmaster John Nunn, you will be ready to shock your next opponent with a deadly checkmate, whether in a school match, a club tournament – or even a championship game!

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"A great book, which I think will be useful to a wide range of players, say from 1400 to 2400. Chess is largely a matter of pattern recognition, so exercises like these are useful to everyone." – Frederick Rhine, CHICAGOCHESS.BLOGSPOT.COM

Secrets of Modern Chess Strategy

John Watson

In a profound but thoroughly practical manner, this classic work explores how chess concepts have evolved over the past 70 years. Acclaimed double-winner of the British Chess Federation and United States Chess Federation 'Book of the Year' awards.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"can, without resorting to hyperbole, be considered a classic" – GM Nigel Short, THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

Chess Strategy in Action

John Watson

Here Watson fleshes out the theory presented to enormous acclaim in *Secrets of Modern Chess Strategy*. He illustrates the modern practice of chess with examples from imaginative players such as Kasparov, Kramnik, Anand and Ivanchuk, and tempestuous innovators like Shirov and Morozevich.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"…above all else Watson is excellent at explaining these mysterious grandmaster concepts to the club player" – IM Richard Palliser, CHESS MONTHLY

Learn Chess Tactics

John Nunn

This book teaches basic tactical ideas such as the fork, pin and discovered attack, and introduces general ideas like elimination, immobilization and compulsion. A basic knowledge of simple tactics will enable a novice to start winning games, by giving checkmate or capturing material.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"The quality of the material, the fine layout, and the enlightening comments make this book the ideal introduction to chess tactics for the inexperienced player." – SCHACHMARKT

How to Build Your Chess Opening Repertoire

Steve Giddins

Whether a novice or a master, every player needs to select an opening repertoire. In this book, the first to focus on these issues, Steve Giddins provides common-sense guidance on one of the perennial problems facing chess-players. He tackles questions such as: whether to play main lines, offbeat openings or 'universal' systems; how to avoid being 'move-ordered'; how to use computers; and if and when to depart from or change your repertoire.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"I can recommend this book unreservedly to anyone who is serious about improving" – Phil Adams, 3Cs website

Secrets of Practical Chess (new enlarged edition)

John Nunn

What is the best way to improve your chess results? Memorizing openings, learning endgames… there must be an easier way! How about making the most of your existing talent? Contains 45% more material than the first edition.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"Grandmaster John Nunn offers practical advice on how to improve your chess results. It includes guidance on making decisions at the board, the study of opening, middlegame and endgame play, use of computers plus the selection and use of chess books. … I found the chapters on use of computers and the selection and use of chess books of particular interest" – David Mills, TIME TROUBLE

The Road to Chess Improvement

Alex Yermolinsky

"How can I improve my game?" is a perennial question facing chess-players. Alex Yermolinsky is well-qualified to offer advice – having trained himself, slowly but surely raising his game to top-class grandmaster standard. In this award-winning book he passes on many of the insights he has gained over the years, steering the reader away from 'quick-fix' approaches and focusing on the critical areas of chess understanding and over-the-board decision-making.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"a magnificent achievement, by far the finest book I've ever seen on the subject of practical play" – GM Matthew Sadler, NEW IN CHESS

Understanding Chess Endgames

John Nunn

Assuming no specialized endgame knowledge, John Nunn presents 100 key endgame concepts, and explains how they are used to win games or save difficult positions. He covers all the main types of endgames and typical thinking methods, and so equips readers with all the skills needed to excel in this vital phase of the game up to good club level and beyond.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"A fantastic endgame primer … Nunn has distilled a vast amount of detailed endgame research into clear and well-presented chunks. There are 100 short sections, each with four examples, each with a diagram, fitting neatly across two pages" – GM Daniel King, THE GUARDIAN

101 Chess Opening Traps

Steve Giddins

This timeless collection of deadly traps might win you games in just a handful of moves! The book focuses on established opening traps that club players are most likely to fall for.

Also available on Chess Studio.

“To my delight and amazement [my opponent] fell straight into the trap” – Alec Toll, Open File

Learn Chess

John Nunn

Starting with the very basics, this book tells you everything you need to know to become a successful chess-player. No prior knowledge is assumed. The reader learns step-by-step, with each new point illustrated by clear examples. By the end of the book, the reader will be fully ready to take on opponents across the board, or on the Internet, and start winning.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

“an excellent primer. The prose is lucid and the presentation systematic; an adult reader with no prior knowledge of the game will be taught all he needs to know” – James Vigus, DRAGON

Chess for Children

Murray Chandler and Helen Milligan

With this charming book, children will delight in learning the basic moves of chess. All the rules are explained step by step, assuming no prior knowledge. The lessons are reinforced by the inventive tales that George is told by his pet alligator Kirsty, self-proclaimed Grand Alligator of chess.

Chess is widely recognized as a useful tool for developing creative thinking in children, yet the rules of the game are straightforward. With this book, even children as young as five can enjoy exciting games and will thoroughly enjoy outwitting friends and relatives.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"…the best book of its type ever published" – Peter Connor, CHESSCOUNTRY.COM

"The highly professional design of this book commends it for use in chess lessons for beginners" – Dr W. Schweizer, ROCHADE

Grandmaster Secrets: The Caro-Kann

Peter Wells

The Caro-Kann is one of the most popular responses to 1 e4. Black stakes a claim to the central squares and seeks free development for all his pieces. While solid, it is by no means a drawing weapon – the resulting positions generally contain at least a degree of imbalance and the critical lines lead to sharp positions with chances for both sides. Many new approaches for both sides have been developed in recent years, and a good understanding of these ideas is vital for anyone looking to handle either side of the Caro with success.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"I would be quick to pick up this book as an e4 player or if I defended it with the Caro-Kann. Wells really focuses on how to play the opening by presenting a wide range of ideas for both sides. Explanations abound … the analysis and coverage is outstanding." – Lou Mercuri, CHESS HORIZONS

Play the Najdorf Sicilian

James Rizzitano

The Najdorf Sicilian has a unique place amongst chess openings: for several decades it has been regarded by the top grandmasters as the best way for Black to play soundly for a win against 1 e4. James Rizzitano, a battle-hardened Sicilian warrior, distils the most important ideas and themes from current practice to provide an ideal guide for those looking to succeed as White or Black in the Najdorf in the modern scientific era.

Also available on Chess Studio.

“A good book for those that want to start playing the Najdorf with Black and also recommendable for Najdorf players not the least because it is very much up to date and includes state of the art knowledge about the lines presented. Also quite useful for players that face the Najdorf with White, specially those that play Bg5 or Be3 since so many different lines for Black are analysed here.” – Hedinn Steingrimsson, WWW.SCHACH-WELT.DE

Play the Alekhine

Valentin Bogdanov

The Alekhine is arguably the most forcing and aggressive reply to 1 e4. Black immediately forces the pace and drags the game onto his own favoured territory. Those who specialize in the Alekhine find that the opening has a real practical sting and quick-strike potential. The coverage in this book is even-handed, and there are abundant ideas presented to both sides.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"This is Bogdanov's third book for Gambit, showing that this quality publishing house trusts the author – and why wouldn't they? The language is fluent and informative, and the sample games are well chosen and instructive." – Marko Tauriainen, SUOMEN SHAKKI

Chess Explained: The Queen's Gambit Declined

James Rizzitano

The Queen's Gambit Declined is one of the most important and popular of chess openings. Both sides have ways to create imbalance and test their opponent's skills and knowledge in a full-blooded struggle. In addition to the traditional main lines with Bg5, White has at his disposal the Exchange Variation, and the Bf4 system, both of which can be handled in highly aggressive style if he wishes. Rizzitano covers all these lines and a plethora of other important options, focusing on the fundamental ideas on which they are based.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"I should also loudly call attention to Rizzitano's new, well-written, and amazingly well-researched *Chess Explained: The Queen's Gambit Declined*…" – John Watson, THE WEEK IN CHESS

Chess Explained: The French

Viacheslav Eingorn and Valentin Bogdanov

The French appeals to a wide range of chess temperaments: it is solid yet uncompromising, and with a variety of chaotic variations to appeal to the most bloodthirsty of players, but also offering more tranquil lines to those seeking a quieter existence. Chess Explained books provide an understanding of an opening and the middlegames to which it leads, enabling you to find the right moves and plans in your own games.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"…if you are considering utilizing the French as a weapon against 1 e4, then this book is a very good and inexpensive way of deciding if the opening is for you. It will give you a solid grounding in fundamental positional ideas and typical tactics in the French." – Munroe Morrison, OPEN FILE

Chess Explained: The Classical Sicilian

Alex Yermolinsky

The Classical (1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6) is one of the most popular and respected systems of the Sicilian. Black develops his pieces more quickly than in many Sicilian systems, and intricate piece-play often results. Yermolinsky covers lines that retain the independent significance of the Classical move-order, such as 6 Bc4 Qb6 – a line in which he is a leading specialist.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

“Yermo’s book represents a good way to get to grips with this sound and interesting opening system.” – Phil Adams, 3Cs website

Chess Explained: The c3 Sicilian

Sam Collins

The c3 Sicilian is one of White's most popular and poisonous ways to avoid the main lines of the Sicilian. With the forcing line 1 e4 c5 2 c3, White denies his opponent the chance to demonstrate his preparation in some chaotic system. There are plenty of tricks and traps in the c3 Sicilian, and the open piece-play that often results can lead to quick attacks and means that careless play will rarely go unpunished.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"…the format is well suited to the average club player who wishes to start using this variation." – David Mills, TIME TROUBLE

Chess Explained: The Grünfeld

Valentin Bogdanov

The Grünfeld creates immediate imbalance: Black strikes at White's centre with all available resources. In the main lines, White creates a large pawn-centre and launches an attack. While the theory of these lines has been extensively developed, there is a coherent logical thread that needs to be understood in order to get to grips with the theory and handle the resulting positions. This book features a special contribution from Viacheslav Eingorn on the key ideas of the Rb1 Exchange main line, which he was instrumental in developing.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"If you like aggression when you play Black then this book is for you. It creates immediate imbalance and again it is crucial to know how to handle this opening as White too." – Carl Portman, DEFENCE FOCUS

Chess Explained: The Nimzo-Indian

Reinaldo Vera

The Nimzo-Indian is one of the most important of all chess openings, and popular at all levels of play. It provides winning chances for both sides as it leads to structures of great strategic variety and complexity. Key battlegrounds in the Nimzo include the blockade, IQP positions, the handling of unbalanced pawn-structures, and the struggle between bishop and knight. An understanding of these topics will prove valuable in a very broad context.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"This is a very well-written book with enough analytical material to launch your Nimzo-Indian career, and more than enough explanation to justify the series title." – John Watson, The Week in Chess

Chess Explained: The Queen's Indian

Peter Wells

The Queen's Indian is an important and popular opening at all levels of play. Black's flexible stance allows him to choose between a range of solid and dynamic structures. In turn, White can play flexibly, opposing Black's fianchetto, or can try to force the pace in the centre and start a hand-to-hand fight. It is an opening rich in nuances, and many of the modern main lines involve moves that look extravagant, but are backed up by a deep underlying logic.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"The annotations in particular really impressed me, for the author actually did *explain* what was happening at every stage of the game. Everything appeared logical as I played through the games and read the annotations. Where alternatives are given, you are told *why* a certain move is good or bad, not just the fact that it is so. Peter Wells is to be congratulated on presenting everything so lucidly." – Alan Sutton, EN PASSANT

Chess Explained: The Modern Benoni

Zenon Franco

The Modern Benoni is one of the few openings where White has no easy way to force drawish simplifications or deny Black any dynamic counterplay. In this book Franco shows how Black can seek to create the kind of mayhem that has attracted champions such as Tal, Kasparov and Topalov to the Benoni, and also demonstrates how White can seek either to put a positional clamp on the game, or else to storm Black's position before his development is complete. A special section deals with the vital question of move-orders.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"These books provide 25 well annotated, up to date model games which you can use to guide you when learning the openings. Excellent introduction to these openings for intermediate players." – Paul Dunn, AUSTRALIAN CHESS

Chess Explained: The Meran Semi-Slav

Reinaldo Vera

Belying its solid classical appearance, the Semi-Slav is one of Black's most aggressive responses when White opens with the queen's pawn. The Meran is its traditional main line, and often leads to chaotic positions of immense strategic and tactical richness. Vera draws upon decades of personal experience to explain the underlying logic of the Meran and related lines, and to pick out the key features of positions that to the untrained eye might appear random and unfathomable.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"What he offers is honesty! I like that. It means to me you can trust the rest of the book because he is honest about his own contribution." – Bob Long, WWW.CHESSCO.COM

Chess Explained: The Taimanov Sicilian

James Rizzitano

The Taimanov Sicilian is one of the most flexible options for Black in the Open Sicilian. It leads to a great variety of central structures, and the player with the better understanding of typical Sicilian themes will often emerge victorious – Taimanov positions need to be understood well in order to be played well. This book covers the Paulsen set-up with …Qc7 in addition to the 'pure' Taimanov with …Nge7.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"I'm really impressed with how thorough and helpful the explanations are. I'm quite sure that anyone interested in taking up the Taimanov would learn a lot from this book – in fact, the average club player would probably be able to make do with this as his or her one and only Taimanov book." – S. Evan Kreider, WWW.CHESSVILLE.COM

Chess Explained: The Main-Line Slav

David Vigorito

The Main-Line Slav is one of the key battlegrounds of modern chess, with adherents among all levels of chess-players. This book discusses all major lines following the moves 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3 dxc4. Vigorito dissects the most important themes and nuances, placing them firmly in the context of the practical struggle, making sure that readers will be familiar with the resources at their disposal, and understand when to employ them.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"…a solid understanding of the pawn-structures and piece-play will be the main factor in the success of any player who takes on this opening. … As an introductory work to the Main-Line Slav, this book is an excellent place to start" – Carsten Hansen, WWW.CHESSCAFE.COM

Chess Explained: The English Opening

Zenon Franco

The English Opening is a flexible and dynamic choice for White, which avoids a great deal of sharp and well-mapped opening theory. It is popular with all levels of chess-players, and has been used to good effect at world championship level by Kasparov, Korchnoi, Botvinnik and other greats of the game. The English gives rise to an immense variety of structures, ranging from reversed Sicilians to Hedgehogs and fluid or locked central structures.

Also available on Chess Studio.

“Altogether I found this book really helpful in both the white as well as the black side of this opening.” – Andy May, WWW.NSGCHESS.COM

Nunn's Chess Endings Volume 1

John Nunn

Going beyond standard texts, Dr Nunn shows how to apply knowledge of standard endgames to find the right methods in tricky real-life practical situations – even when they differ greatly from the idealized forms given by traditional endgame manuals. Nunn shows that lack of familiarity with key ideas can cause important ideas and themes to be missed even by very strong players. We discover that a staggering amount of previously published endgame analysis is simply wrong, and that many of the standard guidelines are at best partially true. This first volume covers general topics and discusses in detail pawn endings, queen endings and minor-piece endings.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"I think this really is a fantastic book. … The book's introduction and the first chapter (The Three Key Endgame Skills) are some of the best endgame-related chess prose I've read in a long time." – Arne Moll, CHESSVIBES.COM

Nunn's Chess Endings Volume 2

John Nunn

In this award-winning two-volume series, Dr John Nunn identifies new and important motifs which occur repeatedly in over-the-board play. Tactical elements are heavily featured, and the focus is on endgames that are susceptible to concrete analysis. The discussion is geared to the over-the-board player; the ideas underlying the analysis – however complex – are richly explained in words. This second volume focuses on rook endgames – the most common and important category of practical endgames. Nunn also covers endings with rooks and minor pieces, a wide and rich area of strategic endgame play that is universally recognized as vital for chess mastery, but nevertheless neglected in chess literature.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"The book is in many respects different and better than the majority of the other books on the endgame where often the inspiration of the author languishes after a few chapters. … the reader undoubtedly takes profit even from a passive or lazy reading: so great is the way the author explains complex positions making them easy and appealing to any range of audience" – Martin Eden, SOLOSCACCHI

Garry Kasparov's Greatest Chess Games Volume 1

Igor Stohl

Garry Kasparov dominated the chess world for more than twenty years. His dynamism and preparation set an example that is followed by most ambitious players. Igor Stohl has selected 74 of Kasparov's best and most instructive games from 1973 to 1993, and annotated them in detail. The emphasis is on explaining the thoughts behind Kasparov's decisions, and the principles and concepts embodied by his moves. Stohl provides a wealth of fresh insights into these landmark games, together with many new analytical points. This makes the book outstanding study material for all chess enthusiasts.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"[Stohl] often improves on Kasparov's past comments. It is one of this year's best books, and it could be a great help to Kasparov in preparation of his own works about his career." – GM Lubomir Kavalek, WASHINGTON POST

Garry Kasparov's Greatest Chess Games Volume 2

Igor Stohl

This second volume covers Kasparov's career from 1993 up to his retirement in 2005, a period during which he successfully faced the challenge of a new generation and achieved some of his greatest successes, both creatively and competitively.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"Congratulations to Gambit and to Igor Stohl for this masterpiece! As a matter of fact I would like at this point to state how much this book for me personally constitutes an absolute milestone in the field of chess books, but extraordinary quality needs no more words. … sets new standards in the field of commentary and presentation of mastergames! Categorically a must-buy!" – Martin Rieger, WWW.FREECHESS.DE

Endgame Challenge

John Nunn

John Nunn presents 250 challenging positions where your task is to find a cunning way to win or draw. In many cases the odds against success seem overwhelming, yet by using all the tactical resources in the position it is possible to achieve the goal. Nunn's detailed solutions contain many points and clarifications that have hitherto gone unmentioned, so readers will rarely be left to wonder whether their intended solution really did work. In an over-the-board game, the ability to use the pieces in harmony is paramount, and those players who can exploit every resource in a position are those who become champions. While the focus in this book is on tactics, readers will also develop a greater understanding of many important endgame topics, such as fortresses, stalemate defences, the opposition and zugzwang.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"The first 50 pages contain 250 diagrams to solve, and then we get 250 pages of shocking solutions – shocking in the sense that even world-class players might draw or even resign positions, when beautiful and unlikely possibilities still exist" – Bab Wilders, NEDERLANDS DAGBLAD

John Nunn's Chess Course

John Nunn

Following on from his successful books *Understanding Chess Endgames* and *Understanding Chess Middlegames*, John Nunn fleshes out the theory by showing how World Champion Emanuel Lasker handled a wide variety of practical situations. We see how Lasker's play, which his opponents found so unfathomable, was based on logic, extreme pragmatism and a deep understanding of how chess-players think. Nunn covers topics not usually considered, such as queenless middlegames and manoeuvring, and dissects strategic issues including piece-activity, pawn-structure and bishop vs knight. He looks at psychological aspects of chess, such as choosing lines which are most uncomfortable for the opponent. The explanations focus on general ideas rather than detailed analysis. The book concludes with a selection of exercises, with full commentary and explanation.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"Now and again, amongst the hundreds of new books published, a jewel arrives. … Choosing to examine chess strategy, tactics, etc., through the medium of the career of one player satisfies two objectives – one, the biographical chess career of a world champion and the other, all techniques necessary to become a proficient chess-player. Nunn succeeds magnificently in achieving this. When I was involved in running a chess stall at congresses, many times I faced the question 'Can you recommend a chess book that I can read?'. Now, I would not struggle to find an answer." – Bill Frost, CHESS DEVON

Win with the Stonewall Dutch

Sverre Johnsen, Ivar Bern and Simen Agdestein

The Stonewall Dutch is a traditional favourite amongst club players, as it offers Black ready-made attacking plans on the kingside. As Bent Larsen noted, the Dutch also has the tendency to 'bring out the coward' in opponents, giving it an added practical sting. However, up until the late 1980s, the Stonewall wasn't fully trusted at grandmaster level, despite its earlier use by Alekhine and Botvinnik. Black's attacking plans were too one-sided, and White's methods too well worked out. The change came when a new generation of players, including Nigel Short and Simen Agdestein, showed that Black could handle his position in many other ways, including play on the queenside and in the centre, with the 'Stonewall' structure stifling White's attempts to generate play of his own. Agdestein in particular has continued to experiment with many new set-ups and move-orders for Black, and this book contains a wealth of new recommendations and suggestions based on this work.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"An outstanding book … Not only do the authors rehabilitate an underestimated opening – they even do so by means of inspiring chapters supported by the personal experiences of leading experts." – GM Peter Heine Nielsen, SKAKBLADET

Secrets of Positional Chess

Dražen Marović

How can one determine if a piece is weak or strong? Or if a square is weak or strong? These are the principal questions that grandmaster and trainer Dražen Marović addresses in this important book. By discussing carefully-chosen games and positions, Marović explains how to recognize good and bad features of positions, and how to make use of one's advantages and exploit the opponent's weaknesses.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"As in his previous works, Marović's deep knowledge shines through and he makes welcome use of classics and not just recent games. This work looks at many important positional principles, such as the weakness of the second rank or the use of rooks on half-open files … the club player who takes time to study its many themes, and hundreds of well-explained examples, should significantly boost the depth of their positional understanding memory bank" – Richard Palliser

Secrets of Chess Defence

Mihail Marin

Good defensive abilities earn players a great many half-points and full-points. The climax of the defence is the launching of a devastating counter-attack, a skill at which all the great chess champions have been adept. Of particular interest to club players is Marin's discussion of how to defend against unsound attacks, and the problem of how to parry the attack while retaining winning chances. Other topics include attack and defence in equal positions, where both sides must judge carefully how much of their resources to devote to the attack and the counter-attack. The main subject, though, is the case where the defender is fighting for his life, and must decide how to maximize his chances of survival. Marin considers psychological issues and explains the main options available to the defender: simplification, cold-blooded defence, a positional sacrifice, 'blackmailing' the attacker, or a counter-attack.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"Chess defence is invariably the part of the game that a lot of players don't like to study because they find it too boring or they'd rather attack like Tal. In this his first publication, Mihail has written a book that will change your mind about defence as an important element to the game." – Michael Stevenson, NEW ZEALAND CHESS

Secrets of Attacking Chess

Mihail Marin

What are the premises for a successful attack? Marin discusses the traditional concept that a player with the advantage is obliged to attack, and also the value of notions of logic and justice in deciding whether to attack. If we believe an attack is justified, but cannot back it up with concrete variations, how do we decide whether to trust our intuition? Marin surveys typical attacking scenarios, such an attack on two wings, with a queenside attack as a prelude for a swift strike on the other wing, and all-out attacks against apparently well-defended positions. He also explains why grandmasters generally prefer to maintain as many options as possible, and investigates the role of prophylactic thinking in attacking play.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"A quick glance at *Secrets of Attacking Chess* might prove somewhat intimidating. While there is plenty of explanatory prose Marin believes in backing up his conclusions with concrete analysis. A closer look reveals that Marin has a definite pedagogical bent and has taken pains to sprinkle instructive comments throughout the book that are destined to stay with the reader. Highly Recommended." – IM John Donaldson, JEREMYSILMAN.COM

Vishy Anand: World Chess Champion

Vishy Anand and John Nunn

Anand has been one of the world's top players for more than two decades, but it's not just his results that make Anand special. His style of play leads to highly spectacular games, and his speed of thought is the stuff of legends. He is also a great explainer of ideas, as his annotations for this book demonstrate. Anand is renowned as 'Mr Nice Guy', popular with both the public and his fellow supergrandmasters. This new expanded edition of the award-winning *Vishy Anand: My Best Games of Chess* features 30 extra games from the period of Anand's greatest successes, selected by Anand and annotated by John Nunn, and also contains a biographical sketch and a detailed career record.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"This book is full of wonderful games, many of which are tremendously complex, and occasionally the variations run to a considerable depth – neither Anand nor Nunn refrains from showing concrete variations, where the position warrants it. But both offer a nice balance of explanatory annotation as well, so there is a great deal of instructional value in here as well." – GM Luke McShane, NEW IN CHESS

Win with the London System

Sverre Johnsen and Vlatko Kovačević

The London System is a perennial favourite of club players, as it is a very sound and solid system with a real practical sting. The authors of this new book seek to maximize this sting in two principal ways. Firstly, by explaining in detail the typical plans for White, they help readers to make the most of their chances, whether they are based on a kingside attack, queenside penetration, central play, or transition to a favourable endgame. Secondly, they advocate some subtle move-orders that limit Black's options, and give White possibilities to change the nature of the game and go straight for the kill if Black responds casually or inappropriately. These move-orders have been tested successfully by co-author Kovačević at grandmaster level, and much of the analysis presented here is of totally new variations, and is previously unpublished. Covers all responses to 1 d4 against which White can use the London System.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"This is a first-class book, extremely well written, about a system that for too long has had its light hidden under a bushel." – Michael Stevenson, NEW ZEALAND CHESS

How to Play Chess Endgames

Karsten Müller and Wolfgang Pajeken

In this companion volume to the award-winning *Fundamental Chess Endings*, Müller and Pajeken focus on the practical side of playing endgames. They cover all aspects of strategic endgames, with particular emphasis on thinking methods, and ways to create difficulties for opponents over the board. Using hundreds of outstanding examples from modern practice, the authors explain not only how to conduct 'classical' endgame tasks, such as exploiting an extra pawn or more active pieces, but also how to handle the extremely unbalanced endings that often arise from the dynamic openings favoured nowadays. All varieties of endgames are covered, and there are more than 200 exercises for the reader, together with full solutions.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"Karsten Müller rose to the Mount Olympus of endgame literature with *Fundamental Chess Endings*. … His latest book, *How to Play Chess Endings*, with colleague Wolfgang Pajeken, is a sequel to that standard work." – Harry Schaack, KARL

101 Winning Chess Strategies

Angus Dunnington

Without strategy, a chess game is just a series of tactical tricks. A good strategy binds together the tactics, and enables a player to make methodical progress towards victory. This book makes sure you will never be short of winning strategies. Angus Dunnington utilizes his many years of chess playing and training to provide an arsenal of ideas that can be employed in many types of position. These plans have been proven in many grandmaster games, so you can be sure that by using them your game will be soundly based.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"…a useful book for players seeking to improve their creativity and piece coordination" – Alan Borwell, SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENCE CHESS

The Dynamic English

Tony Kosten

In the first book to explain the popular English Opening for many years, Grandmaster Kosten supplies players of the white side with a set of weapons that will equip them to challenge any opponent they face. Kosten concentrates on aggressive treatments of the English – an approach that has brought him great success in tournament play. His book provides everything you need to start attacking with the English Opening.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"Grandmaster Tony Kosten, a great exponent of this line, makes out a compelling case for this opening. He conveys his understanding with great skill" – IM Craig Pritchett, THE HERALD

A Strategic Chess Opening Repertoire for White

John Watson

Such has been the acclaim for John Watson's ground-breaking works on modern chess strategy and his insightful opening books, that it is only natural that he now presents a strategic opening repertoire. The repertoire is based on 1 d4 and 2 c4, following up with methodical play in the centre. Watson uses his vast opening knowledge to pick cunning move-orders and poisonous sequences that will force opponents to think for themselves, providing a true test of chess understanding. Throughout, he discusses strategies for both sides, so readers will be fully ready to pounce on any inaccuracies, and have all the tools to decide on the most appropriate plans for White.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"Watson's *Secrets of Modern Chess Strategy* I consider as one of the best books ever written! So for me Watson is the big star among chess book authors and I presume that all his books are best sellers – and that this last one, *A Strategic Chess Opening Repertoire for White*, also will be that" – GM Simen Agdestein, VERDENS GANG

John Nunn's Chess Puzzle Book

John Nunn

Most chess puzzle books put you in an artificial situation: you are told a combination exists, what the theme is and what you are required to achieve. This one is different. In a real game, a player may sometimes need to find a combination. On the other hand he may have to reject a tactical idea and simply find a good positional move. His task is to find the right move, whatever it may be. The 300 puzzles in this book put you precisely in that situation. Spectacular ideas abound in these positions, but it is for you to decide whether to go in for them, or whether you would be falling into a trap. If you need them, there are hints to help you on your way. The book ends with a series of tests to measure your skills against those of other players.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"I think puzzle books serve as a great training tool before tournaments, to sharpen up tactics and help players to get into the groove of being able to calculate some lengthy variations. I don't have a great deal of puzzle books but this is clearly the best one on my bookshelf!" – GM Stephen Gordon, 3Cs Chess

Secrets of Pawn Endings

Karsten Müller and Frank Lamprecht

This book provides a thorough course in endings with just kings and pawns, from the simple to the highly complex. Armed with this knowledge, the reader will also be able to tackle other types of endgame with greater confidence and certainty. Many interesting and beautiful positions are included, and there are test positions for the reader to solve. The authors follow the rigorously logical conventions introduced by John Nunn in his famous series of endgame manuals. This has necessitated a phenomenal amount of new analysis of theoretical positions to assess precisely the merits of each and every move.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"For years, *Secrets of Pawn Endings* has been one of my favorite endgame books. Müller and Lamprecht have written a book of great theoretical and practical significance. *Secrets of Pawn Endings* is a must-have." – Josh Specht, CHESSVIDEOS.TV

Secrets of Rook Endings

John Nunn

The first edition of this book ushered in a new era in chess publishing. It was the first book based on computer-generated position databases that are guaranteed to provide the actual result of a position.

However, this book is no computer print-out. It takes a human 'oracle' to extract the useful information from this mass of data and to identify new principles to help the rest of us appreciate the key practical points. Dr John Nunn, top-class grandmaster and renowned theoretician, performs this role admirably. He has identified where previous theory has been overturned, and where there are important new results. Dr Nunn was also the first to reveal the general importance of the many 'reciprocal zugzwang' positions.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"I am sure that in fifty years' time *Secrets of Rook Endings* will be regarded as one of the great classics of the twentieth century. It is as close as any book can ever realistically come to perfection on its subject." – GM Julian Hodgson, BRITISH CHESS MAGAZINE

Secrets of Pawnless Endings

John Nunn

After the success of *Secrets of Rook Endings*, John Nunn turns his attention towards endgames without pawns. These occur surprisingly often in practice and are extremely tactical in nature. This book unites man and machine in the search for ultimate answers. The computer databases created by Ken Thompson, formerly of Bell Laboratories, can state with certainty the correct result of any position with five pieces or fewer. John Nunn has extracted the most important information from these databases and presented it in the form of guidelines and specific key positions, which can be more readily digested by the human mind. With most competitive games these days being played to a finish in a single session, this knowledge may prove invaluable over the board.

This is a new and expanded edition of an important book. Since the first edition was published, the databases for six-man endings have been created, resulting in some surprising and paradoxical discoveries. The coverage has therefore been expanded to include the most interesting features of these endings.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"…a treasure trove of the precisely extraordinary, with considerable practical value for more serious players in the earlier sections" – GM Jon Speelman, THE INDEPENDENT

Secrets of Grandmaster Chess

John Nunn

This book, originally published in 1997, is an updated edition of *Secrets of Grandmaster Play*, which was hailed as a modern classic and won the British Chess Federation Book of the Year Award in 1988. It covers Nunn's career from childhood up to 1985 and features 24 of John Nunn's best and most instructive games, including his award-winning 1985 victory over Beliavsky. This superb manual of strategy and tactics also offers advice on how to think at the board and insights into the world of professional chess.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"A beautifully eloquent and instructive blend of variations and verbal explanations." – INSIDE CHESS

John Nunn's Best Games

John Nunn

Winner of the British Chess Federation Book of the Year Award

John Nunn has an unparalleled reputation as a chess theoretician and writer of the highest class. In this book he focuses his attention on his own games and annotates 40 complete games and many game fragments.

The book covers the period 1985-93, when Nunn rose to enter the world top 10, and includes victories over Short, Tal, Korchnoi, Anand, Gelfand, Portisch, Judit Polgar and many other top players. The analysis of these games provides a manual of attacking chess from one of the world's best tacticians. This book is far more than a collection of superbly analysed games, however, since the author has brought the games to life with anecdotes from the events, and provides many practical tips which will be of benefit to aspiring chess players of all levels of ability.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"[Nunn's] combination of erudition and straightforwardness makes him a particularly good subject to emulate. … Perhaps the high point of this collection is Nunn's 25-move victory over Sokolov of the USSR at the Dubai Olympiad, 1986. Wiping a top Soviet player off the board so unceremoniously was something that British players simply never did until Nunn and Tony Miles came along." – T.D. Welsh, 'Top 500' Amazon.co.uk reviewer

Dynamic Pawn Play in Chess

Dražen Marović

This book tackles fundamental questions such as: ‘How should pawns be used to fight for the centre?’ and ‘How does the central pawn formation affect planning for both sides?’ These issues are central to understanding chess. Marović discusses central pawn-structures and their impact on play both in the centre and on the wings. He begins by surveying how the pawn’s role in controlling the centre has been developed over the last 150 years, and how this has led to the refinement of concepts such as the ‘dynamic’ backward pawn and the positional exchange sacrifice. The bulk of the book is devoted to discussions of the main type of centre: Open Centre; Closed/Blocked Centre; Fixed Centre; and in particular the Mobile/Dynamic Centre.

Also available on Chess Studio.

“Marović has obviously been in the company of some of the greatest players and listened carefully to what they had to say … this book is excellent value and is sure to improve your chess” – Chris Rice, WEEKEND CHESS

The Survival Guide to Rook Endings

John Emms

For all chess-players – from beginners to grandmasters, and whatever their style of play – one thing is certain: rook endings will arise in a great many of their games. Yet it is precisely in this area of the game that many players give away hard-earned points, either through lack of knowledge or inadequate understanding. Most previous books on the subject have been extremely technical and theoretical, but this one is different. John Emms provides the essential specific knowledge and explains the key concepts that will enable readers to find the right plan in most common types of rook endings.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"If you didn't purchase this book first time around then I think you missed out. Rook endgame knowledge is at the core of endgame theory. Many club players would save a huge amount of points by having the confidence to go into a rook endgame, especially when a pawn or two down." – Munroe Morrison, Open File

The Giant Chess Puzzle Book

Zenon Franco

More than anything else, a player's ability to find tactical solutions determines how successful he is over-the-board. No endgame scheme, opening idea or strategic plan, however brilliant a concept it may be, is of any value unless it is accurately calculated and implemented. This book provides a wealth of chess puzzles to test just about every facet of your tactical ability. Franco has searched recent events and used powerful computers to seek out previously unpublished puzzles, and has also drawn extensively upon Latin American sources that he has been scouring for brilliant examples over the last three decades. The book begins with 120 relatively easy positions suitable for novices, and ends with 80 extremely tough puzzles, which provide a mind-bending challenge even for grandmasters. There are 1001 puzzles in all, including themed sections and graded tests, all with detailed computer-verified solutions and verbal explanations of the main instructive points.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"Most of the positions will not have been seen before in other publications and you will not fail to improve your game – certainly your tactical awareness – if you have the discipline to work through this lovely book. Chess problems are like life. We are given a question and we don't always know the answer. Is it right to turn away and not try to find that answer? Maybe we should just roll up our sleeves and meet that challenge head on; after all the answers are all there, waiting to be found. Enjoy the journey and absorb yourself in just some of the delightful mysteries of the 64 squares." – Carl Portman, DEFENCE FOCUS

The Cambridge Springs

Krzysztof Panczyk and Jacek Ilczuk

The Cambridge Springs is a popular defence to the Queen's Gambit that takes its name from the famous tournament in 1904 during which it was tested in a number of games. Since then it has become firmly established as a club-player's favourite, since Black sets a number of traps and can generate a very quick initiative if White fails to respond precisely. Several world champions have used the Cambridge Springs, most notably Alekhine and Smyslov, while Kasparov has played it on occasion, including a sensationally quick victory over Karpov in 1985. The authors combine thorough research with a wealth of original material to offer comprehensive coverage of this combative system. While the main body of the book covers both sides of the Cambridge Springs, it also offers Black a repertoire against White's alternative options in the Queen's Gambit, the most important of which is the Exchange Variation.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"A professional effort where the authors have made their own contributions and have overturned long-held erroneous conclusions. I'm quite happy giving it 9/10" – GM Glenn Flear, New in Chess

Understanding the King's Indian

Mikhail Golubev

Despite its sharp and aggressive nature, the King's Indian is an opening that lends itself well to discussion in terms of plans, ideas and pawn-structures. Those who are familiar with these underlying themes will enjoy an enormous practical advantage when facing those who lack this understanding, even if they are theoretically well-prepared. This engaging personal account of the King's Indian is also wide-ranging and detailed. The main games are all from Golubev's own practice, enabling him to provide a completely accurate description of the decisions at the board. The notes contain a wealth of references to games and ideas from other King's Indian specialists, and the coverage is sufficient to provide Black with a flexible and aggressive repertoire.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"If you work with this book, you will affirm that the author is with you in the tiniest details, thorough, self-critical, and comprehensively analytical" – E. Carl, ROCHADE

How to Calculate Chess Tactics

Valeri Beim

Thinking methods are at the heart of the chess struggle, yet most players devote little conscious effort to improving their calculating ability. Much of the previous literature on the subject has presented idealized models that have limited relevance to the hurly-burly of practical chess, or else provide little more than *ad hoc* suggestions. Here, experienced trainer Valeri Beim strikes a balance by explaining how to use intuition and logic together to solve tactical problems in a methodical way. He also offers advice on when it is best to calculate 'like a machine', and when it is better to rely on intuitive assessment.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"One of Beim's insights is that, when we find a beautiful combination that fails, we're often halfway to finding the move we should play. The opponent's strength that breaks our attack is precisely the target we should set about undermining. … Beim shares with us a set of tools that, once mastered, appear well-designed for rapid, effective calculation in the critical positions that separate the master from the amateur." – Derek Grimmell, CHESSCAFE.COM

Perfect Your Chess

Andrei Volokitin and Vladimir Grabinsky

Andrei Volokitin is one of a rare breed of players: he achieved a ranking in the world's top 20 while still a teenager, playing dynamic and often brilliant chess. Although we cannot all aspire to emulate his achievements, there is much that we can learn from his training methods, his games and his general approach to chess. These topics are the subject of this book, written in collaboration with his trainer. The core material of the book is 369 positions where the reader is given a task or asked a question. These tasks resemble those that players regularly face over the board, and are especially useful from a training viewpoint. Many of the positions are from Volokitin's own games, so we get the 'inside story' on some truly spectacular chess. We are also presented with fine examples from Grabinsky's training files, carefully collected and graded over the years for their instructive merit. The commentaries and detailed solutions explain the key issues in each position, and also convey the authors' philosophy of chess and their love for the game.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"I had the opportunity to ask 21-year-old GM Valery Aveskulov, how it was that the Ukraine produced so many great young talents. I had already factored in a tradition of excellence, government and private support, and an economically challenging environment in which being a chess professional did not look so bad, but Valery added one more key ingredient – good coaching. One of the best he said was IM Grabinsky of Lvov and then rattled off a list of teenage IMs and GMs over 2500 on a rapid course toward 2600. *Perfect Your Chess* is geared towards this level and many of the young talents Aveskulov mentioned have gone through this material which relies on the games of Volokitin and others." – IM John Donaldson, USA Team Captain

Chess Training for Budding Champions

Jesper Hall

Many chess-players find it difficult to improve their game beyond a certain level. They can see basic tactics, know a little about openings and can calculate a few moves ahead. However, so do their opponents. What is the next level, and how does one get there? This book is aimed at chess-players who have progressed well beyond beginner level and have acquired the basic skills required to play at club level, but need guidance to improve their understanding of chess. It is based on the training program that Hall himself followed when he was an up-and-coming player. The lessons are not based on 'quick fixes', but instead provide a well-rounded course in all aspects of chess that will equip the reader well for his chessboard battles, and provide a firm yet flexible basis for further improvement.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"The examples are great, the pieces of advice even better and the presentation is logical and easy to follow" – BIBLIOTEKSTJÄNST

Play the Sicilian Dragon

Edward Dearing

The Dragon Variation is one of the key battlegrounds of modern chess, and a perennial favourite of ambitious chess-players of all standards. Black develops his pieces so as to maximize the strategic pluses granted him in the Open Sicilian. If White is to expose a defect in the Dragon, it must be by a direct attack, and this leads to ferocious battles, with White trying to checkmate the black king via the h-file, while Black seeks to gain counterplay down the c-file and on the long diagonal. In the Dragon, many Sicilian themes are seen in their clearest form, with the …Rxc3 exchange sacrifice particularly important. Even Dragon endgames tend to be very sharp, with Black often possessing a swathe of mobile pawns in return for an exchange, a piece, or even a whole rook. In hazardous territory, a guide is essential, and Edward Dearing has stepped up to offer his services. He explains at length the all-important general themes, and advises on how to choose plans and methods, drawing upon his many years of experience and study of the Dragon. Dearing also provides an up-to-date view of Dragon theory, including many new ideas and suggestions to help the reader tailor his Dragon repertoire to suit his own preferences.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"This is the new Dragon bible and because of the analysis it will remain essential to every Dragon player for years to come. Gambit's emphasis has always been on quality and depth, thus giving their books a long shelf life. *Play the Sicilian Dragon* is a great example of this, and also one of the best opening books in recent years." – IM John Watson, The Week in Chess

Mastering the Najdorf

Julen Arizmendi and Javier Moreno

The Najdorf is the most popular line of the Sicilian Defence for a very good reason: Black can play for a win without taking undue risks. The Najdorf's fundamental soundness has been confirmed in countless top-level games, and in particular by Garry Kasparov's successful use of it throughout his career. White has tried a wide variety of approaches against the Najdorf, including quiet positional lines and the traditional main line with 6 Bg5. Recently the idea of a rapid kingside pawn advance has found favour. The Najdorf's landscape changes rapidly, and this presents its devotees with a complex task: they must not only keep up-to-date with sharp theoretical lines, but must also have a firm grasp of the strategies that underpin the main systems, both old and new. This book lends a helping hand to those who play the Najdorf or wish to take up this complex opening. Two Najdorf experts from Spain present a flexible repertoire for Black, including a wealth of original analysis of the critical variations. They also explain the key ideas behind the Najdorf, focusing on those plans that are most relevant to modern practice.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"If you are interested in taking up the Najdorf, I highly recommend this book if you are looking for a good reference that will let you learn the opening quickly and give you excellent winning chances to boot." – Bill Whited, CHESS COUNTRY

The Quickest Chess Victories of All Time (new enlarged edition)

Graham Burgess

This updated and expanded new edition contains a comprehensive collection of the shortest decisive games in chess history. It is an indispensable guide to the pitfalls and traps that lurk in every opening system. An ability to punish errors in the opening is an essential aspect of modern opening play. The thousands of games featured in this book show how to detect the opponent's errors and take maximum advantage. Studying this book will help you seize your chances to win crisp miniature games, while reducing your chances of suffering an opening catastrophe, and overall will improve the level of your opening and tactical play.

- An outstanding and comprehensive collection of games won in thirteen moves or fewer.
- Explanations of the errors made and how to avoid them.
- Helps sharpen your killer instinct!

Also available on Chess Studio.

"The notes are excellent. Each chapter has a brief summary of the odds of an opening's difficulty. Transposing move-orders are usually mentioned. Some games have little anecdotes or historical connections. Whenever a game is resigned for less-than-obvious reasons (as most of these are) Burgess explains the mate threat or material loss to us patzers succinctly and precisely. This is really a book of how *not* to play openings. It will complement any repertoire books and opening encyclopediae. I highly recommend it for your shelf, even to intermediate players (like me). You might find it entertaining. You will find it useful." – C. Dunn, Amazon.com reviewer

How to Become a Deadly Chess Tactician

David LeMoir

A guide for chess-players to help them spot unlikely-looking tactical tricks and launch cunning attacks. Readers are shown how to hunt the enemy king and how to seize the initiative with surprising sacrifices. LeMoir shows that the key factors in becoming a deadly tactician are motivation (having the willingness to sacrifice and to consider tactical ideas during play), imagination (being aware of tactical concepts that lead to ideas which other players might miss) and calculation (being able to analyse and calculate effectively). This user-friendly and humorously written book contains many outstanding examples of seized opportunities, together with guidance on how to spot surprising tactics and handle positions of material imbalance. Throughout, there are exercises for the reader to tackle.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"LeMoir has selected his chess material extremely well – there are a huge number of startling examples which I'd never seen before – and his comments are always entertaining or instructive" – GM Matthew Sadler, NEW IN CHESS

Play the Open Games as Black

John Emms

This book fills a gaping chasm in chess literature. For years, those who wish to take on the black side of the Ruy Lopez have had to muddle their way through against the variety of alternative openings at White's disposal, as there have been no good books to assist them. Grandmaster John Emms is ideally qualified to deal with this subject. Not only does he face these openings as Black, but he also used to play many of them as White before he graduated to the Lopez. He provides no-nonsense answers to such openings as the King's Gambit, Vienna, Scotch, Four Knights, Italian Game, Bishop's Opening and the variety of oddball gambits White can try.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"I was also impressed by watching the way Magnus [Carlsen, age 10] read chess books. While the others lay around and relaxed or clowned around in their rooms, Magnus lay in his bed and read Grandmaster John Emms's *Play the Open Games as Black*, a brilliant book that covers everything but the Ruy Lopez that one can meet when answering 1 e4 with 1…e5. That the book was in English and at a level more suited for top international players did not appear to worry Magnus in the slightest. He didn't need to get out a board and pieces either, he simply read the games from the book without a problem." – GM Simen Agdestein, *How Magnus Carlsen Became the Youngest Chess Grandmaster in the World*

Anti-Sicilians: A Guide for Black

Dorian Rogozenko

The Sicilian is far and away the most popular chess opening. The reason is obvious: it enables Black to fight for victory without taking excessive risks. The Sicilian scores well in practice and is a firm favourite with players of all standards. Given both the Sicilian's fearsome reputation and the amount of theoretical preparation required to tackle it head-on, many players prefer to side-step the Open Sicilian with one of the Anti-Sicilian systems at White's disposal. These include: positionally motivated lines such as the 2 c3 Sicilian and the 3 Bb5 systems; slow but tricky attacking lines including the Closed Sicilian and the King's Indian Attack; and aggressive but loosening ideas like the Grand Prix Attack and a variety of gambits. This book equips Black to fight against all these lines. In the most critical variations, Rogozenko provides a choice between a solid and an aggressive option. He caters for those who meet 2 Nf3 with the three main moves, 2…d6, 2…e6 and 2…Nc6.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"To be blunt, any player who plays the Sicilian Defense as Black **must** have this book" – Chris Chambers, GEORGIA CHESS

50 Essential Chess Lessons

Steve Giddins

Steve Giddins has chosen 50 supremely instructive games – some old, some new, and including many that few readers will have seen before. He has annotated these games in detail from a modern perspective, explaining the useful lessons that can be learnt from them, while avoiding the harmful dogma that characterized many older works of this type. Topics include: Attacking the King, Defence, Piece Power, and Endgame Themes. Each game is followed by a recap of the main lessons to be learned. Giddins writes in a highly accessible down-to-earth style that appeals to club players seeking to improve their understanding of practical chess. His knowledge of Russian-language chess literature has enabled him to find many excellent examples that have not appeared in previous western literature.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"Highly recommended for 1200-2000 players seeking for a game collection, especially those who would like to improve their understanding in middlegame pawn-structures. Giddins tried to update Chernev's *Most Instructive Chess Games* but he outdid his teacher." – CHESSBUG.COM

Instructive Modern Chess Masterpieces

Igor Stohl

Igor Stohl has selected 62 outstanding games from recent years and analysed them in painstaking depth. Here he presents his findings to chess enthusiasts, who will find the games entertaining and the annotations both instructive and illuminating. Stohl is an outstanding theoretical expert, so the opening phase of each game reads like a lesson in the key strategic aspects of the opening chosen, with a critical survey of modern trends. The middlegame is dissected and the critical decisions subjected to keen scrutiny – we are invited inside Stohl's laboratory to join him in the quest for the truth. The endgame phase, if reached, is handled with similar erudition, with insights into the grandmaster's approach to questions of technique. Following each game there is a discussion of the most important lessons to be learned. The expanded and revised new edition of this award-winning work features 12 new top-level games from the period 2000-7 annotated in great depth – about 40% new material. There are also corrections to the existing notes and a revised Introduction.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"This is an outstandingly thorough and insightful book. I have greatly enjoyed playing through some of the 50 deeply annotated games and learned a fair amount in the process, including various insights in the opening phase in which Stohl is a renowned expert … I heartily recommend it" – GM Jonathan Rowson

The Gambit Guide to the Torre Attack

Graham Burgess

An award-winning author provides user-friendly coverage of an opening in which he has a wealth of experience against players of all levels. The Torre Attack is a very attractive system for White as it allows him to set the agenda from the outset, preventing many counterattacking systems. It has quick-strike potential if Black is careless or unfamiliar with the subtleties. The book provides detailed coverage and explanation of the Torre. The main themes are explained, and the critical variations examined in detail. The book focuses squarely on the ideas and systems that are of most relevance to the practical player. The analysis has been checked and revised for this new electronic edition.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"A couple of books dealing with the Torre came out early in the nineties, but this superb work by Burgess surpasses them. The Torre is a very flexible set-up and gives White good chances of having a pleasant initiative after 1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 with 3 Bg5. The Torre will repay careful study and provide interesting chess. The strategic introduction whets the reader's appetite right from the word go as Burgess shows, via 12 illustrative games, just how dangerous the Torre is, and readers will realise that by taking up the opening they will have excellent chances of a quick and decisive attack" – IM Richard Palliser, HULL CHESS CLUB MAGAZINE

An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire for Black

Jouni Yrjölä and Jussi Tella

This book equips the reader with everything he needs to know to play Black in a game of chess. Two experienced Finnish players have described an exciting repertoire based on the move 1…d6 in reply to whatever White's first move happens to be. Black's strategy is hypermodern and dynamic: White is encouraged to seize space, while Black develops his pieces rapidly and actively, waiting for the ideal moment to attack and destroy White's central bastions. The variations advocated have been proven in top-level play and have quick-strike potential if White is at all careless or imprecise. The repertoire is based around the Pirc Defence and the variations 1 d4 d6 2 c4 e5 and 1 d4 d6 2 Nf3 Bg4, which fit seamlessly together with 1…d6 systems against White's various flank openings.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"To my pleasant surprise the whole book focused solely on Black's opening move 1…d6. Having dabbled with this a few times myself, I can assure you that the opening is a lot more dazzling than it sounds. The authors appear to have done an extremely diligent job, covering all possibilities for White and, with not far off 300 pages, you get a lot of chess for your money" – GM David Norwood, WEEKEND TELEGRAPH

How Chess Games are Won and Lost

Lars Bo Hansen

Traditionally, chess games have been divided into three stages – opening, middlegame and endgame – and general principles presented for how to handle each stage. All chess-players will be well aware that these principles all too frequently fail to help in their selection of the best move. In this important work, Lars Bo Hansen, grandmaster and professional educator, presents chess as a game of *five* phases, and explains the do's and don'ts in each: the opening; the transition to the early middlegame; the middlegame; strategic endgames; technical endgames. With a wealth of examples from both his own practice and that of his colleagues, Hansen discusses the typical mistakes and pitfalls, and shows how to handle the subtleties unique to each stage. He also gives advice on how to work on your chess in each aspect of the game. Of special value is his explanation of how to study typical middlegames, and that middlegame preparation – a neglected area for most players – is both possible and necessary.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"Very rarely is so much good advice packed into one book. Hansen considers the lessons to be learned from the way his opening repertoire evolved, pawn structures, advice on swindling, defending, when to seek counterplay, tactics, technical endgames and how to use computers to analyse. This amongst many other ideas. What was particularly impressive to me was the 25 pages of discussion on how to play Queen's Gambit Exchange structures from the point of view of Black and White. Really good stuff. This may be for the advanced player (1800+), but it's a real treasure trove of ideas. It is very rare that one volume can contain such a wide breadth of information over the whole spectrum of chess ideas without sacrificing depth. A true 'desert island' chess book." – Munroe Morrison, OPEN FILE

Essential Chess Sacrifices

David LeMoir

Sacrifices are an essential part of chess. Those who never consider sacrificing will miss countless opportunities and find that promising positions repeatedly slip away. Players who do not appreciate their opponents' sacrificial possibilities will be unable to see danger signs, and find themselves on the wrong end of too many king-hunts. Rather than merely cataloguing the various possibilities and providing examples, LeMoir discusses the possible follow-ups to the sacrifices, the defensive options against them, and the positional factors that might suggest whether the sacrifice will be sound or unsound. There are many important types of chess positions that can only be played well by those who understand the thematic sacrifices that are possible.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as German-language Chess Studio and Kindle editions.

"What makes this book brilliant, is that the concepts and positions examined are part of any top player's fundamental chess knowledge. However, for the average player, below this aura of invincibility, there is no way to gain such an understanding without help from a teacher such as Mr LeMoir. We cannot sift through games, recognize the themes, make numerous case studies, and figure out what factors lead to success, and what factors let you down. David LeMoir has done this for us, and anyone who devotes some time to this book will emerge a better chess-player." – Søren Søgaard, SEAGAARD REVIEWS

A Course in Chess Tactics

Dejan Bojkov and Vladimir Georgiev

The advice frequently given to chess-players eager to improve their results is straightforward: study tactics! But there is often little useful guidance as to how this is best done. By solving puzzle positions? Or endgame studies? By dissecting the games of great tacticians? Few books present a structured approach to tactics, so this book fills a valuable niche in the ambitious player's library. The authors present each major tactical theme in turn, explaining how it works and providing inspiring examples. They then explain how you can spot the idea in your own games and use it to your advantage. You immediately get a chance to put your knowledge to the test, as there are challenging exercises throughout the whole book, with detailed solutions. The second part of the book offers more advanced material, and takes us inside the professional's tactics laboratory. Here we see how tactical themes are combined, and employed to achieve strategic goals. We are also shown how grandmasters spot the targets for their breathtaking combinations, which we thus come to see not as sheer witchcraft, but as the product of disciplined thought and training.

Also available on Chess Studio.

"The two Bulgarians spend the first part of the book explaining and delineating the elements of tactics (pin, deflection, decoy, discovered attack, etc.) and then move on to some more advanced tactical themes and then top the book off with 40 pages of exercises to reinforce what has been learnt."
– John Saunders, BRITISH CHESS MAGAZINE

Chess Endgames for Kids

Karsten Müller

Most chess games are decided in the endgame. It is here where you reap the reward for your good play, or else use all your cunning to deny the opponent victory. Knowing just a few key endgame techniques will dramatically increase your confidence, as you will understand what positions to aim for and which to avoid. Starting with the basic mates and the simplest pawn endings, this book provides all the endgame knowledge that players need to take them through to club level and beyond. Müller carefully guides us step-by-step through a fascinating range of endgame tactics and manoeuvres, helping us understand the underlying logic. Throughout the book, many cunning endgame tricks are highlighted. You will have fun springing them on friends, family – or your opponents in serious tournaments. *Chess Endgames for Kids* makes learning chess endgames fun. But it is also a serious endgame course written by a leading endgame expert, and provides a firm basis for vital skills that will develop throughout your chess career.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"Useful for both young kids and old kids like me!" – GM Matthew Sadler, NEW IN CHESS

Storming the Barricades

Larry Christiansen

Many books provide training in how to round off a successful attack with a final combination, but that's really just the easy part. The difficult thing is to decide how and where to attack in the first place, and to build up the offensive without giving the opponent real counterchances. Larry Christiansen is highly respected by his grandmaster colleagues for his ability to conjure up dangerous attacking chances from almost any position. In this book he takes more than 50 real-life positions, breaks each one down into its key elements and explains the right strategy for conducting a successful attack. The examples are selected to illustrate a wide variety of attacking themes and to provide an instructive and accurate picture of how modern players attack and defend.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"Christiansen reveals what he has studied to become a master tactician … in contrast to many attacking books, Christiansen gives fresh examples from recent years, organizing them according to attacking principles" – GM Lubosh Kavalek, WASHINGTON POST

A Complete Chess Course

Antonio Gude

This book is a comprehensive manual for those new to chess, which explains with great clarity the basics of the game. Using innovative methods, Gude ensures that readers quickly grasp each key concept before building on it by introducing new ideas. This is an interactive course. With a total of 280 questions and exercises to tackle, the reader will quickly gain skills rather than mere knowledge. Gude strips the mystery away from tactics and combinations by looking first at the strengths and weaknesses of each piece in isolation, and then showing how they work together with each of the other pieces. He also presents guidelines on chess strategy that will help shape the reader's understanding of chess, and a wide variety of patterns for the reader's all-important 'mental database'. The section on openings explains the main aims of each major opening, and the style of game to which they tend of lead, together with some key variations. Later chapters provide examples of how to launch attacks, putting together the skills from earlier chapters, and deal with issues such as chess training, psychology and competitive chess at club and tournament level.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Antonio Gude is an extremely experienced chess writer and teacher from Spain. Several of his books on tactics and for beginners are long-standing best-sellers in Spanish language. Gude has also translated a great many books, including some of the classics of chess literature.

"My fellow teachers at my elementary-middle school have been trying to get a real curriculum for our chess program, and in Gude's book I think we've found it" – Ben George, Houston, Texas

Problem Chess: Art and Magic on the Chessboard

Göran Forslund

This is a book for those who enjoy problem-solving and appreciate clever solutions, and have at least a basic knowledge of chess. It is about the composition and beauty of chess problems: positions forged not in combat but from pure human imagination, and featuring elegant and surprising solutions. The author offers a personal view of chess problems, conveying an infectious zeal for his subject. Because this is as much a collection of short stories as it is a conventional problem collection. No matter how you use the book, you can expect many hours of excitement and a craving for more. Each chapter presents a variety of chess problems of a specific type, ranging from the familiar 'mate in two' puzzles via retro-analytical problems worthy of a whodunit novel to 15-move series problems and the 'outer limits' of fairy problems (altered rules or pieces). Throughout, the creative processes of problem chess are at the forefront of the discussion. Readers are given the opportunity to solve most of the problems before being presented with the solutions. Or you can simply enjoy reading the book from cover to cover without ever needing to set up a chessboard.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Göran Forslund (1958–2015) was a computer software professional with a PhD in computer science, with a focus on artificial intelligence. He published chess compositions in most genres, and won awards in the World Chess Composition Tournament, and several of his problems were selected for the FIDE albums. He also served as a judge in chess composition contests. He played regular chess too, with some success: he was a finalist in both the Swedish Junior Championship and the Swedish Correspondence Chess Cup.

"problem books are usually written for the already initiated. But now an exception has been accomplished by Göran Forslund. … Forslund introduces each chapter with short texts about, for example, ice hockey, film, childhood memories or

Einstein's theory of relativity, and finds relations with chess problems. This makes the book very special and personal, even a little autobiographical." – IM Axel Ornstein, TIDSKRIFT FÖR SCHACK

Understanding the Scandinavian

Sergey Kasparov

The appeal of the Scandinavian Defence is easy to understand: it is very forcing – Black is virtually guaranteed to get his desired structure. There are no annoying 'Anti-Scandinavians' to study! But for many decades the Scandinavian was regarded with some suspicion, as Black apparently loses time recapturing on d5. Modern players have a different view. The great Danish player Bent Larsen kickstarted the revolution with his provocative assertion that it is an improved Caro-Kann (and, not least, beating Karpov with our opening)! But the 21st-century Scandinavian is a different beast altogether; the new main line of the whole opening (3…Qd6) has proven to have great strategic richness, with more than a few tactical tricks lurking just behind the scenes. The Scandinavian has been transformed into an opening that strong grandmasters are willing to use as their main defence, rather than as an occasional surprise weapon. This thoroughly modern guide focuses on these new approaches, while also covering the more traditional main lines. Kasparov guides the reader carefully through each system, explaining his recommendations with wit and clarity. With his help, you will have your opponents wishing there really were some 'Anti-Scandinavian' lines!

Also available on Chess Studio.

Sergey Kasparov is a grandmaster from Belarus. He plays regularly in international events around the globe and is an experienced writer, with several books and online reports to his credit.

"Conclusion: *Understanding the Scandinavian* is a new addition to the book market and focuses especially on the strategic basis of the Scandinavian Defence. It is both an instruction manual and a guide book, and distinguishes itself particularly by explaining and illustrating as much as possible of what's happening on the board." – Uwe Bekemann, German Correspondence Chess Federation

Grandmaster Chess Move by Move

John Nunn

A collection of John Nunn's best games from 1994 to the present day, annotated in detail in the same style as the best-selling *Understanding Chess Move by Move*. Throughout, the emphasis is on what the reader can learn from each game, so the book is ideal study material for those seeking to progress to a higher level of chess understanding. There is also entertainment in abundance: Nunn has a direct aggressive style, and many of his opponents in these games are ambitious young grandmasters from the generation inspired by Kasparov's dynamic chess. The book also includes all of John Nunn's compositions – problems and studies – with full solutions.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

"GM John Nunn is at the pinnacle of chess writers and this book shows why. His analysis is always first-rate, and he does a good job of using words, where practical, to explain what's going on. Besides giving you 46 of his most interesting games (complete with detailed notes) played during the last third of his career, he also throws in a slew of chess problems and studies, as well as two interesting articles." – Michael Jeffreys, WWW.CHESSVILLE.COM

How to Beat 1 d4

James Rizzitano

Rizzitano, author of *Understanding Your Chess*, presents a full repertoire for Black against 1 d4, based on the Queen's Gambit Accepted (QGA). The QGA is an extremely popular opening amongst players of all levels, as it gives Black free development and counterpunching potential, especially if White takes up the challenge and tries to set up a broad pawn centre. The QGA's soundness is shown by the number of top-class grandmasters who have used it in critical games – it was a key factor in Short's victory over Karpov, and has even been used by Garry Kasparov at world-championship level. Rizzitano has chosen to recommend dependable main lines of the QGA, and throughout emphasizes how Black can create winning chances and White's typical ways to go wrong. The repertoire is completed by a set of weapons against White's alternatives to offering the Queen's Gambit, ranging from the stolid Colle to the weird Hodgson Attack and the reckless Blackmar-Diemer.

Also available on Chess Studio.

James Rizzitano is a strong international master who dominated chess in the New England region during a 14-year period from 1976 to 1989 – he won 157 out of 336 events in which he competed. His career highlights include victories over Alburt, Benjamin, Benko, Christiansen, Dlugy, I.Gurevich and Wolff, and exciting draws with de Firmian, Larsen, Speelman, and the legendary former world champion Tal. Rizzitano has recently made a return to competitive chess.

"Overall, I see no reason not to recommend this book to players from 1200 through at least master level. The analysis is comprehensive, the judgments and evaluations are carefully considered, and a complete repertoire against a major opening move is presented. Highly Recommended." – Lou Mercuri, CHESS HORIZONS

Understanding the Leningrad Dutch

Valeri Beim

The Leningrad System of the Dutch Defence is an interesting hybrid of the Dutch and the King's Indian. For many years, it was viewed with some suspicion in view of the slight positional weaknesses created in Black's position. However, in the 1980s dynamic new approaches were introduced by such players as Sergei Dolmatov, Evgeny Bareev, Mikhail Gurevich and especially Vladimir Malaniuk. These players showed how an active approach could compensate for these defects, and offer Black excellent winning chances. Since then, the Leningrad has been a popular and effective opening choice for players of all levels. A good understanding of the themes of the Leningrad is at least as important as detailed knowledge of its theory. Valeri Beim has a wealth of experience with the Leningrad Dutch and is an accomplished trainer, so is ideally qualified to guide the reader through the twists and turns of this remarkable opening.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Valeri Beim is a grandmaster who lives in Austria. He has won numerous tournaments and plays in the Austrian and German leagues. For many years, he was the head trainer at the chess school in Odessa (Ukraine), and he was also the trainer of the Israeli olympiad team. This is his second chess book.

"Valeri, as well as being an experienced chess trainer, is a player that uses the Leningrad Dutch Defence himself which is a big plus when writing a chess book. Through nine well-written chapters Valeri covers not only the Leningrad Dutch but also covers what to do if White plays a gambit or tries to deviate early. At the end of the book there is also homework in the form of exercises to do to see how much you've learned. If you wish to learn and understand how to play the Leningrad Dutch then this is the book for you." – Michael Stevenson, New Zealand Chess

The Ruy Lopez: A Guide for Black

Sverre Johnsen and Leif Erlend Johannessen

The Ruy Lopez (or Spanish Opening) is one of the critical chess battlegrounds. It has long been recommended as an excellent chess opening for training purposes, as it leads to a wide variety of structures and strategies. This book is a complete guide to handling the black side of the Lopez, based principally around the Zaitsev Variation, upon which Anatoly Karpov relied during much of his career. This line leads to sharp play, often in open battles where Black gains active counterplay and challenges White to seize the initiative on the kingside. The authors explain in detail how Black can weather the storm. They also explain how Black can handle the practical problem of the Ng5 repetition, and recommend reliable procedures against White's other options in the Lopez, starting off with the Exchange Variation, and moving on to a variety of closed systems. Throughout, the emphasis is on what readers actually need to know and understand in order to play the opening successfully in practice. There is a great deal of explanation of important ideas, and the authors take pains to guide their readers away from potential pitfalls.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Sverre Johnsen is a FIDE-rated player from Norway. He is an enthusiastic chess analyst, researcher and writer, and co-author of *Win with the London System* one of the most popular openings books of recent years. **Leif Johannessen** is a young grandmaster, also from Norway. He plays in several national leagues and has represented his country in many team events. The quality of his opening preparation is shown by the fact that he won the prize for most important theoretical novelty in *Informator 92*.

"Good chess opening books are all about 'feel' – do you feel the authors are making you at home in the variation, do you feel they are giving up their 'secrets' to you, the reader, and do you get the feeling they are on your side? Well, this book scores very highly in this respect; take the Preface, for

example. It's a 15 page discussion by GM Johannessen on how to learn a chess opening (albeit aimed at the Zaitsev, but the lessons are universal) – and it does the subject matter wonderful justice. I've read magazine and internet articles which do not come close to Johannessen's logical explanation of taking an opening from a thought over a coffee at a chess bookstall to a full part of your tournament repertoire. For my money, the best part of the book, although the rest of the material doesn't lag behind in quality." – Munroe Morrison, Open File

Understanding the Marshall Attack

David Vigorito

The Marshall Attack is a chess opening like no other. Rather than subjecting himself to the 'Spanish torture' so typical in the Ruy Lopez, Black simply gives away a centre pawn. But in return, he gets long-term attacking chances and activity that can persist well into the endgame. It is almost a century since Frank Marshall invented his sensational gambit, but it is still controversial, and more popular than ever amongst the best players in the world. In their hands, the Marshall Attack looks remarkably solid – even if White neutralizes Black's attacking chances and remains a pawn up, Black often achieves full positional compensation. However, the Marshall appears a forbidding opening to ordinary club players, who feel that the theory is too difficult to understand and much too complex to memorize. Many simply avoid it with both colours. That, argues David Vigorito, is a shame. He shows that many typical Marshall positions can be broken down into elements that we can all grasp, and so build up an intuition to guide us. Then we are able to tackle this incredible opening and develop a feel for why pieces go to the squares that they do, and when Black has sufficient compensation, and when he does not. Of course, the Marshall remains a highly sharp and concrete opening, even to those who are versed in its unique brand of black magic. Vigorito provides detailed, cutting-edge theoretical coverage of all its main lines and the most important Anti-Marshall systems.

Also available on Chess Studio.

David Vigorito is an International Master from the United States. He plays regularly in high-level competitions, including the US Championship. He has written extensively for a variety of publications and is a chess teacher. This is his second book for Gambit.

"a good summary of existing theory, and the author has taken care to track down often overlooked, but sometimes theoretically crucial correspondence games, and importantly

there is a decent sized section on Anti-Marshall lines that often crop up in practice." – GM Michael Adams, DAILY TELEGRAPH

Understanding Rook Endgames

Karsten Müller and Yakov Konoval

Endgames with rooks and pawns are the most frequently occurring in chess, arising in about 1 game in 10. If you learn an important technique in this endgame, chances are you will end up using it sooner or later. And there are a great many methods and concepts that can be mastered with a little effort. This book highlights the key themes in rook endings, and at each turn invites the reader to test his knowledge and skills with abundant exercises. Rook endgame theory does not stand still. New practical examples illustrate novel approaches as players seek to pose problems to their opponents – Magnus Carlsen has shown that even the driest-looking positions can feature deadly traps. The ongoing creation of new endgame tablebases – of which co-author Yakov Konoval has been at the forefront – enables new classes of positions to be assessed with definitive certainty. Using six-man and the brand new seven-man tablebases, the authors re-examine many of the old evaluations and reach new and enlightening conclusions about classic rook endings. You will be startled and amazed, and soon discover that you are becoming a far more effective endgame player.

Also available on Chess Studio.

German grandmaster **Karsten Müller** is arguably the world's foremost writer on chess endgames. His 'masterwork', *Fundamental Chess Endings*, is a modern endgame 'bible' and was studied intensively in his youth by current World Champion Magnus Carlsen. **Yakov Konoval** is a Russian chess-player and programmer who studied at Mikhail Botvinnik's chess school. He has written programs for solving chess problems and has pioneered new techniques for generating endgame tablebases.

"Unbelievably well written … many new discoveries are revealed here. One of the best endgame books of all time" – John Elburg, WWW.CHESSBOOKS.NL

“You can feel confident that anything you study and learn on the basis of Müller’s book is 100% correct” – GM Matthew Sadler, NEW IN CHESS

Chess for Life

Matthew Sadler and Natasha Regan

WINNER OF THE ECF BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD

In this thought-provoking, wide-ranging and often inspiring book, the authors examine how chess style and abilities vary with age. The conventional wisdom is that greater experience should compensate for a loss of youthful energy, but with so many of the world elite currently in their twenties, chess is increasingly looking like a young man's game. By making a number of case studies and interviewing players who have stayed strong into their forties, fifties and beyond, the authors show in detail how players can steer their games towards positions where their experience can shine through. Interviewees include: GM John Nunn, GM Yasser Seirawan, GM Nigel Short, GM Judit Polgar, GM Keith Arkell, GM Pia Cramling, FM Terry Chapman, GM Jon Speelman, GM Sergei Tiviakov and WIM Ingrid Lauterbach. By examining so many aspects of chess, the authors have written a work that ends up transcending its subject-matter, and becomes a text on how and why we love chess, the means by which we can play successfully whatever our age and level of play, and how chess is truly a game for life.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Matthew Sadler is one of the strongest British players of recent decades. Having become a GM in his teens, he twice won the British Championship and was awarded an individual gold medal at the 1996 Olympiad. After concentrating on an IT career for more than a decade, he returned to high-level chess in 2010 and quickly regained a spot in the world top 100. Matthew's struggles to bring his game back up to speed after his long break were part of the inspiration for this book. **Natasha Regan** is a Women's International Master from England who achieved a degree in mathematics from Cambridge University. While pursuing a successful career as an actuary in the insurance industry, she has raised a family

and maintained a strong interest in chess and other board games, including Go.

“unlike any other chess book I have seen. It addresses the subject of how to sustain, and seek to improve, one’s chess strength throughout life, despite the inevitable diminution of calculation ability. Sadler and Regan have produced an insightful analysis of the way chess players of different styles adapted to age and the advancement of theory. From this, and candid interviews … they unveil a *tour de force* of ideas to consider applying to one’s own game. This is not a book for the aging – it is rather a testament to the value of experience with lessons for players of all ages” – Ross Jackson, NEW ZEALAND CHESS

Fundamental Checkmates

Antonio Gude

SHORTLISTED FOR THE ECF BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD

Chess might seem a complex and mysterious game, but the ultimate goal is simple: **checkmate**. Checkmate can occur in all stages of the game, from snap mates in the opening, through middlegame attacks to simplified endgames. Learning how to use our pieces together to corner the enemy king is a **fundamental** skill that all chess-players must constantly practise, sharpen and develop. This book lays out, in systematic and thorough fashion, a wide range of mating patterns and techniques, in particular showing how each **piece-pair** can combine to deliver mate. A working knowledge of these ideas enables players to move on to mating **combinations**, where pieces lay down their lives so that the remaining forces can deliver mate. Gude explains an amazing variety of tactical devices, and illustrates them in unforgettable style with some of the most brilliant mating **attacks** from practice, new and old. There are chapters on how to attack kings in the centre, as well as standard (and other!) attacks against the castled position. This is a true textbook of checkmate; readers will never be short of mating ideas, and will instinctively know when there is a possibility to launch an attack, or when they must parry the opponent's threats. **Fundamental Checkmates** also features more than 300 exercises with full solutions.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Antonio Gude is an extremely experienced chess writer and teacher from Spain. Several of his books on tactics and for beginners are long-standing best-sellers in Spanish language. Gude has also translated a great many books, including some of the classics of chess literature.

"The number of great examples is overwhelming. On the one part there are classic game fragments you may already know, but also a lot is new, giving something for everyone. I myself

am currently using this book as study material for my constant training … the book is actually suitable for any chess player. High recommended" – IM Dirk Schuh, ROCHADE EUROPA

A Simple Chess Opening Repertoire for White

Sam Collins

By choosing variations that lead to similar *structures*, highly experienced player, writer and teacher Sam Collins has put together an ideal repertoire for players with limited study time. White opens with 1 e4 and develops his pieces to natural squares and seeks open lines and the initiative. A successful repertoire is more than a set of variations; it also requires strategic understanding of the resulting positions and a knowledge of the key tactical methods and patterns. Because many of Collins's recommendations lead to IQP (Isolated Queen's Pawn) structures, ideas can easily be transplanted from one opening to another. He gives complete illustrative games that emphasize the main themes. The specific analysis is up-to-the-minute and features many new ideas that have proven their worth in recent grandmaster practice. Throughout there is a great deal of attention to move-order subtleties and on finding nuances in 'sidelines' that your opponents are most unlikely to have examined in detail.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

Irish international master **Sam Collins** won the championship of his home country in 2002 and 2014. He has represented Ireland in numerous Olympiads, winning an individual gold medal at Bled in 2002. He is also an experienced chess teacher who has lectured at the Berkeley Chess School in California. His previous books for Gambit were *Chess Explained: The c3 Sicilian* and the highly successful general opening work *Understanding the Chess Openings*.

"Sam Collins delivers a small but very well thought out repertoire book for White, based on lines that I have hardly seen before – for example the Italian line: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Nbd2!?. One of the most interesting repertoire books at this moment!" – John Elburg, WWW.CHESSBOOKS.NL

Instructive Chess Miniatures

Alper Efe Ataman

Warning: this book is not just entertainment. The author wants to teach you a lot about chess and improve the quality of your play! He has selected 53 miniatures from throughout chess history – the earliest are from the 1850s, while the most recent are from grandmaster events just a few months ago!

A miniature is a decisive game, won in 25 moves or fewer. Most of these 53 games feature brilliant tactics, attacks on the king, and even a few outrageous king-hunts. In many, the winner had to overcome cunning defensive ploys and inventive counterattacks. But our aim in this book is not just to admire the players' skill, but to learn how we can play like this in our own games. Chess coach Ataman is keenly focused on the instructive points, explaining which features of the position justified the attacks, and what prompted the critical decisions. Where analysis is given, it is restricted to what it would be realistic for a human to work out at the board. But why are miniatures so instructive, especially for younger players? It's because we get to see an idea or plan implemented successfully, *in full*. Once we understand what players are trying to achieve, we can then appreciate how to oppose these ideas, and the cut-and-thrust typical in modern grandmaster play will make a lot more sense.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Alper Efe Ataman is a FIDE Master from Turkey. He is a chess publisher, author and an experienced trainer, especially at the scholastic level.

"The author has dragged his net wide and rediscovered gems like Freeman-Mednis, New York 1955, played when the future Grandmaster was still a teenager. *Instructive Chess Miniatures* is a book that will provide plenty of pleasure and instruction at a very reasonable price … recommended" – IM John Donaldson, USA Team Captain

Play the Classical Dutch

Simon Williams

The Classical Dutch is a flexible opening that often gives Black dynamic attacking chances. In this book, one of its most enthusiastic adherents explains the workings of his favourite opening, and provides Black with a complete repertoire against 1 d4. Few opponents will be ready to take on the Classical Dutch, since it has received little attention in chess literature in recent decades. For an opening that has been played by all-time greats such as Korchnoi, Tal and Larsen, the Classical Dutch's current lack of popularity is puzzling. In this book, Simon Williams shows how Black can obtain counterchances against each of White's main options. He also provides recommendations against all of White's alternative approaches against the Dutch, including a variety of sharp possibilities after 1 d4 f5.

Also available on Chess Studio.

English grandmaster **Simon Williams** has gained a reputation for playing daring attacking chess. He represented England in World and European Championships in various age groups, and has been a regular in the British Championship since his early teens.

"The author makes a spirited plea for the Dutch. Its key ideas and theory are relatively clear and self-contained, providing a rare opportunity these days to absorb sufficient information to play and experiment confidently without considerable research." – IM Craig Pritchett, THE HERALD

The Seven Deadly Chess Sins

Jonathan Rowson

Everyone loses chess games occasionally, but all too often we lose a game due to moves that, deep down, we knew were flawed. Why do we commit these chess-board **sins**? Are they the result of general misconceptions about chess and how it should be played? And how can we recognize the warning signs better? In this thought-provoking and entertaining book, Jonathan Rowson investigates, in his inimitable style, the main reasons why chess-players sometimes go horribly astray, focusing on the underlying psychological pitfalls: Thinking (unnecessary or erroneous); Blinking (missing opportunities; lack of resolution); Wanting (too much concern with the result of the game); Materialism (lack of attention to non-material factors); Egoism (insufficient awareness of the opponent and his ideas); Perfectionism (running short of time; trying too hard); Looseness ("losing the plot"; drifting; poor concentration).

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

Jonathan Rowson became Scotland's third grandmaster in late 1999, within months of graduating from Oxford University. He was runner-up in the 1997 European Junior Championship, Scottish Champion in 1999 and winner of the Canadian Open in 2000. Rowson's first book, *Understanding the Grünfeld*, has been highly praised for the quality and originality of his writing, and freshness of approach.

"Whenever two large groups argue over a subject so intensely, that subject **must** be interesting and thought provoking … *The Seven Deadly Chess Sins* is a fascinating, original, insightful work by the most promising young chess writer out there. It's well worth owning (in fact, I consider it a **must** own!), and contains a bounty of knowledge that will improve your game at the cellular level if the Zen gene is a dominant one in you … Quite simply, *The Seven Deadly Chess Sins* is one of the

best chessbooks to come out in many, many years." – Jeremy Silman, SILMAN REVIEWS

The Slav

Graham Burgess

The Slav has been played by 11 of the first 13 World Champions, and has been favoured by many stars of modern chess, including Anand, Kramnik, Shirov, Ivanchuk and Morozevich. Its great popularity is due to its extreme solidity and abundant possibilities for dynamic counterplay. This book provides detailed coverage to help players as both White and Black face the challenges of this tough yet rewarding opening. All lines after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 are discussed, except those that transpose to the Semi-Slav. The sharpest tactical lines of the Slav receive especially detailed coverage. These include the critical piece sacrifice in the main line (5…Bf5 6 Ne5 e6 7 f3 Bb4 8 e4 Bxe4), the Steiner line (5…Bg4) with 6 Ne5 Bh5 7 h3, and the possibly dubious but highly dangerous Geller Gambit (5 e4), which was a favourite of the young Kasparov. The trendy …a6 lines are also covered systematically for the first time in chess literature.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Graham Burgess holds the world record for marathon blitz chess-playing. He is a highly versatile chess writer, whose previous books range from general guides for relatively inexperienced players to high-level theoretical manuals. His *Mammoth Book of Chess* won the 1997 British Chess Federation Book of the Year Award, while *Nunn's Chess Openings*, of which he is a co-author, has established itself as the leading modern one-volume openings encyclopaedia.

"The Slav continues to remain a very popular opening at all levels and so a thorough survey from the ever diligent Burgess is very welcome. Burgess has meanwhile managed to maintain his reputation as a very conscientious author with this work, as once again he constantly corrects the analysis of others, whilst providing many important suggestions and improvements himself as well as producing clear assessments of lines" – IM Richard Palliser, HULL CHESS CLUB MAGAZINE

Chess Strategy for Kids

Thomas Engqvist

So you have learned how to play chess, studied tactics and know some basic endgames and openings. What's next? The glue that binds it all together is strategy. By forming a good plan, chess-players seize strong points on the board and target the opponent's weaknesses. Experienced player and teacher Thomas Engqvist shows that it all depends on logic that can be grasped by players of any age. He explains how to identify the right strategy in a wide range of typical situations. With his guidance, you will soon be finding good plans on your own – and then it will be time to demonstrate your tactical mastery! He first teaches the importance of the central squares and the basics of pawn-play, before examining the role of each of the pieces and how they are affected by the pawn-structure. Finally we see how to use them together to launch attacks of many different types. You then get a chance to test your new strategic skills in 27 exercises, all with full solutions. *Chess Strategy for Kids* provides a complete course that will help readers understand the potential of their pieces and play more purposefully in their games. Chess will stop feeling like a series of random events as you take command of your forces and direct them like a general in charge of an army.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Thomas Engqvist is an International Master from Sweden with more than three decades' experience of international chess. He is a successful chess trainer and has also made notable contributions to chess theory. Engqvist is editor of the website schacksnack.se and teaches at a school in the Stockholm area.

"simplifies some chess concepts in a manner that a modern reader can understand and appreciate. … the author clearly shows he understood Nimzowitsch and knows how to convey Nimzowitsch's ideas, but he does it in an easier and more appealing fashion. … I also found the graphics absolutely exhilarating. They show typical chess ideas in a stunning

fashion, which makes them easy to remember, especially for the amateur. I think this book can be a nice gift for children who are interested in improving, or for adults who would like to know more about the game but don't want to deal with some boring authors of the past who … didn't treat the topic in an entertaining manner." – Davide Nastasio,
GEORGIACHESSNEWS.COM

Your First Chess Lessons

Paul van der Sterren

Assuming no previous knowledge of the game, Grandmaster Paul van der Sterren teaches you how to play and draws you into the fascinating world of modern chess. This carefully crafted chess course is divided into true lessons, each building on what has been learned in the previous ones. Before moving on from a topic, you have the chance to test that you have fully understood it with the help of thoughtfully graded exercises. This is a 21st-century guide. Throughout, there are references to online chess resources and suggestions for online activities, such as training, playing and live broadcasts, and chess-related social media. Also dotted throughout the book are pieces of chess lore, practical tips and information about great players past and present.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Grandmaster **Paul van der Sterren** has won the Dutch Championship on two occasions, and in 1993 reached the Candidates stage of the World Chess Championship. He is an internationally renowned chess writer and editor: he was one of the founding editors of *New in Chess*, and is author of the bestselling user-friendly opening guide *Fundamental Chess Openings*.

How to Play Dynamic Chess

Valeri Beim

Chess is fundamentally a dynamic game. Each move changes the situation and the possibilities for both sides. No piece is ever identically as valuable as any other, and their scope changes from move to move. The current generation of supergrandmasters play unrelentingly dynamic chess, but a great deal of chess literature still deals with chess as if it were a predominantly static game. Much of our understanding of the game is based around traditional rules of thumb that might work well 'on average' or in 'typical' situations. But these rules may not equip us at all well in the specific and sometimes exceptional situations that we face in our games. In this book, Valeri Beim explains how to factor in dynamic considerations, and weigh initiative and time against material and other static factors. This is a realistic account by an experienced trainer and battle-hardened competitor, geared towards the needs of players looking to improve their results. Topics include: Dynamics; Development; The King as a Target; Breakthrough; Initiative.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

Valeri Beim is a grandmaster who lives in Austria. He has won numerous tournaments and plays in the Austrian and German leagues. For many years he was the head trainer at the chess school in Odessa, and he was also the trainer of the Israeli Olympiad team. This is his fourth chess book.

"an incredible work, simply the best I have ever read on this topic. I suspect even some players of the first rank will find something to think about, and the rest of us will have our games adjusted forever. If you buy one chess book this year, this should be it. This book is so good, I have to stray from my usual method of categorizing books, and deem it an Instant Classic." – Don Aldrich, CHESS TODAY

Improve Your Positional Chess

Carsten Hansen

Throughout a game of chess, we must constantly make judgements and decisions that cannot be determined simply by calculation. We must then rely on our positional judgement. Good positional skills are primarily developed by experience, but they can also be learnt. In this book, Carsten Hansen provides a wealth of advice and ideas that will help give readers a helping-hand up to new levels of positional understanding. Paramount in this discussion is the player's need to weigh up positional elements at the board, and decide which are most important for the situation at hand. Topics include: The Quest for Weaknesses; What is the Initiative?; Understanding Imbalances; The Relative Value of the Pieces; Decisions Regarding Pawn-Structures; Structural Weaknesses; Where and How to Attack. The book is rounded off with exercises to test your understanding of the concepts discussed, together with full solutions.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Carsten Hansen is a FIDE Master from Denmark who currently lives in the USA. He has a reputation for writing well-researched books on major chess topics, and is known to many through his painstaking book reviews on the Internet. This is his fourth book for Gambit.

"I figure to put about 20 Elo points on to my grade (2433) by the time I've finished; that's how good it is. I can't really say more than that. Oh, and I am **enjoying** reading it!" – IM Andrew Martin, SEAGAARD'S REVIEWS

Solving in Style

John Nunn

In this book, John Nunn, a top-class grandmaster who has also won the World Problem Solving Championship three times, explains the methods by which chess problems and studies are solved. The logical and creative methods advocated, while targeted at the solving of composed positions, may also help players find startling tactical solutions in their games. *Solving in Style* also constitutes an entertaining and insightful introduction to the world of problems and studies. There are chapters on series problems and other unorthodox stipulations, and also a discussion of specific themes such as the Novotny interference. This brand new electronic edition contains 50% more material than the original print edition. There are new chapters on proof games and solving competitions, as well as a large collection of new problems for readers to solve. Unsound problems from the first edition have been replaced, and errors and omissions corrected.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Dr John Nunn is one of the best-respected figures in world chess. He was among the world's leading grandmasters for nearly twenty years, winning four gold medals in chess Olympiads and finishing sixth overall in the World Cup in 1989. He is a much-acclaimed writer, whose works have won 'Book of the Year' awards in several countries. In 2004, 2007 and 2010 Nunn was crowned World Chess Solving Champion, ahead of many former champions.

"Nunn does an excellent job of explaining the special rules of this parallel universe, but where he is likely to gain the most converts is in the field of chess studies … Many of these studies look sufficiently 'game-like' that the over-the-board player will have no trouble appreciating the beauty and ingenuity involved. Highly recommended" – IM John Donaldson, USA Team Captain

Understanding the Sicilian

Mikhail Golubev

Mikhail Golubev has played the Sicilian as Black and White for the whole of his chess career, specializing in the sharpest and most aggressive systems. Here he presents the whole undiluted truth – as best he sees it – about this most popular and cut-throat of openings.

The quality of the games is striking. Even the list of opponents in junior tournaments features Kramnik and Shirov, while more recent opponents include Ponomariov and Svidler. Ivanchuk's extraordinary ideas crop up repeatedly. But we also see Golubev facing more 'normal' opposition, where as the higher-rated player the top priority was to create winning opportunities.

There is much to learn from Golubev's honest 'warts and all' presentation. We see the process of discovery and experimentation, and develop a feel for the spirit of the Sicilian. There is a wealth of original analysis (all scrupulously computer-checked), novelties and strategic guidance. For Dragon, Sozin/Najdorf and Velimirović players in particular, this book is an absolute must-read, but Anti-Sicilian and Taimanov players are among those who must also watch out. All Sicilian lines are covered, with the exception of those that have never occurred in the more than 440 Sicilian games from Golubev's professional career.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Mikhail Golubev is a grandmaster from Odessa, Ukraine, who plays regularly in tournaments in eastern and central Europe. He is a noted expert in several sharp and aggressive opening systems, including the King's Indian and the Dragon. His previous books, *The Sicilian Sozin* and *Understanding the King's Indian*, have been praised for the quantity and quality of their original analysis, and for Golubev's objectivity in identifying the critical lines.

My Secrets in the Ruy Lopez

Lajos Portisch

SHORTLISTED FOR THE ECF BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD

It's major news when a legendary player reveals his opening secrets. And when he has rarely written about his games or preparation methods, and was famous for meticulous, ahead-of-his-time opening analysis, it makes it a true publishing event.

Yet that is what eight-time world championship candidate Lajos Portisch has done. In this book, he opens his extensive opening files and presents the most important games and unused novelties in the Ruy Lopez (or Spanish Game). He also explains the strategies and ideas behind these lines, and places the key games in their historical settings. Anecdotes abound, as do reflections on his key rivals, including Fischer, Karpov, Tal, Larsen and Smyslov.

This is also a thoroughly modern work. As well as drawing upon games from his own long career, Portisch includes important Ruy Lopez games by modern champions, including Anand and Carlsen, describing them from his own unique perspective. All analysis has been computer-verified, with Portisch's hand-made variations standing up to scrutiny in most cases, but with the computer adding new and surprising twists. Thus we see how human creativity can remain a vital component in modern preparation.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Lajos Portisch is one of the greatest players of the modern era. An elite player from the 1960s to the 1990s, he qualified for the candidates eight times and was board 1 for the Hungary team that won olympic gold in 1978, ahead of the USSR. He is one of the 12 Hungarian 'Sportsmen of the Nation' – the country's highest sporting honour.

Extreme Chess Tactics

Yochanan Afek

Tactical ability requires *knowledge* and *skills*: knowledge of patterns and tactical methods, and the skill to recognize them, combine them, and calculate accurately.

This book features both composed *studies* and real-game positions. Composed positions distil tactics into their purest form: nothing irrelevant is present on the board. We can focus purely on the key ideas, which makes them an ideal learning tool. As one of the world's greatest experts on chess composition, Yochanan Afek is the perfect man to select the best studies for this purpose. In over-the-board chess (in which Afek is also highly accomplished), the tactical ideas tend to be less complex, but they may prove harder to identify – unless they are already familiar to you. Afek provides a case in point in his introduction, where the stunning final move of the 2016 world championship could not possibly have been missed by those familiar with an earlier game. All the real-game positions in this book are taken from games by world champions (male or female).

Following the structure of John Nunn's best-selling *Learn Chess Tactics*, in each chapter a theme is introduced and a number of examples are explained. Then the reader immediately gets to use this knowledge in a series of carefully selected exercises.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Yochanan Afek is both a Grandmaster of Composition and an over-the-board International Master. This unique combination of talents makes him a highly insightful writer, noted for his work on the factors that make moves hard to see. He grew up in Tel-Aviv and now lives in Amsterdam. His greatest over-the-board success was winning the Paris Championship in 2002.

The Chess Attacker's Handbook

Michael Song and Razvan Preotu

Life is too short to play boring chess!

That's the mantra of the two young authors of this book, and as you read their energetic and insightful words, you may find yourself caught up in their enthusiasm for direct attacking play.

Their over-the-board successes are not based on mere bravado or trickery, but on a profound understanding of the chessboard struggle and thought process. Song and Preotu consider the role of manoeuvring and prophylactic thought, and examine attacks in the endgame, as well as more standard topics such as play on colour complexes and when and how to launch the pawns in an all-out assault.

And because life's too short to read a boring chess book, the text is packed with advice, study suggestions and anecdotes as well as quotes and references to philosophy and other 'real-world' topics. Their examples are drawn from their own practice and their supergrandmaster trainer, as well as modern classics and older gems. Most of their material you will not have seen before; the rest you will not have seen explained this way before.

Also available on Chess Studio.

The authors are the two highest-rated Canadian juniors. **Razvan Preotu** earned the Grandmaster title in 2016 at the age of 17. The most notable result during his meteoric rise was at the 2016 Calgary International, which he won outright ahead of a strong international field including five GMs. **Michael Song** became an International Master by winning the North American Under-18 Championship. He has represented Canada many times, winning a bronze medal at the 2011 World Youth Championship. His trainer is super-grandmaster Evgeny Bareev.

125 Chess Opening Surprises

Graham Burgess

Surprising the opponent is a primary aim of modern opening preparation. You can't afford to be a stationary target – gone are the days when players worked out an elaborate repertoire from which they never varied.

These 125 opening surprises land like bombshells in the apparent calm of standard openings and disorientate your opponents as they grapple with original problems. This book is a treasure-trove of unusual ideas at an early stage of the opening, each with a firm logical foundation, yet running against the grain of conventional play. Each idea has quick-strike potential and is supported by enough concrete analysis to enable you to try it with confidence.

For this new edition, Burgess has thoroughly revised and expanded the original content with a great many new verdicts and additional analysis and ideas. Every single move has been re-examined and checked against current theory. The brand-new sections mostly deal with ideas that were unknown or untopical before 2016 or 2017.

Reviews of the first edition (*101 Chess Opening Surprises*):

"explodes right in your face, with ideas in all openings ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous" – GM Lubosh Kavalek, WASHINGTON POST

"I was stunned by some of the author's ideas … excellent" – GM Paul Motwani, THE SCOTSMAN

Also available on Chess Studio.

FIDE Master **Graham Burgess** is Gambit's Editorial Director, and one of the founders of the company. He holds the world record for marathon blitz chess playing, and lives in Minnesota. This is his 24th chess book, his earlier works

including well-regarded opening guides and best-selling general texts.

Fundamental Chess Tactics

Antonio Gude

Once a player has learned how the pieces move, the next task is to put them to work – that is, to study *tactics*. For all players, from beginners to champions, *tactical skill* is the main component of chess ability. And this skill must be constantly practised and improved.

This book provides a systematic course in chess tactics and hundreds of exercises to sharpen and measure your skills. With Antonio Gude's assistance, you will understand how the pieces work, so you can carry out your strategic plans and launch devastating attacks. And even in those games where things go wrong, you will always be ready to pounce when given the chance. The book is packed with entertaining and inspiring examples, brought to life with information and stories about some of the more notable figures in chess history.

This is a companion volume to Gude's much-acclaimed *Fundamental Checkmates*:

"Books offering tactical positions to solve are universally agreed upon as first-rate training, but before starting out it makes sense to first have a solid grounding in the fundamentals. This book will do that and more." – IM John Donaldson, USA Team Captain

"[Gude] is well-read, knows important games from the past and present, and uses famous endgame compositions to create a useful mating manual for wide readership" – GM Lubosh Kavalek, HUFFINGTON POST

Also available on Chess Studio.

Antonio Gude is a well-known chess writer and teacher from Spain who has represented his country in international correspondence chess events. His previous book for Gambit, *Fundamental Checkmates*, was shortlisted for the English Chess Federation Book of the Year Award.

How to Beat the Open Games

Sverre Johnsen

The Open Games (those beginning 1 e4 e5) are now more topical than ever, featuring in a high proportion of elite-level games. This new user-friendly guide offers players of all levels a carefully worked-out repertoire, taking into account this wealth of new material.

Noted opening writer Sverre Johnsen has also taken a critical look at the more traditional Open Games, where theory is often based on old or obscure games. Making extensive use of modern computer engines, he has overturned ancient assessments and found new paths that breathe fresh life into positions long thought to be resolved. It is striking how often in his lines Black is able to seize the initiative.

- A full repertoire for Black with 1 e4 e5 when White avoids the Ruy Lopez
- …Bc5 and …Nf6 systems both fully covered after 3 Bc4
- Each chapter starts with a 'Memorable Game' to inspire and set the scene

Johnsen has chosen sound lines that are likely to surprise opponents and deny them the type of game they are seeking. He has deeply researched correspondence sources and recent books on the Open Games, and employs similar methods to those that made his earlier opening works so popular among club-level players.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Sverre Johnsen is a chess analyst, researcher, organizer, trainer and writer from Norway. He is co-author of *Win with the London System* and *Win with the Stonewall Dutch*, two of the best-selling openings books of recent years.

Applying Logic in Chess

Erik Kislik

Is chess a logical game? What constitutes an advantage in chess? How can we set problems and create psychologically difficult situations for the opponent? These are big questions, and Erik Kislik tackles them and others head-on in this thought-provoking, thoroughly modern, and original work.

He answers the first of those questions with a resounding 'yes!'. His assessments focus on concrete points: pawn-structure, material imbalance and compensation. Even though the analytical proofs may be complex, he repeatedly shows that these elements are the keys to evaluating positions and forming plans.

As the trainer of players ranging from high-level grandmasters to average club-players, Kislik is very strong on providing practical guidance on topics such as how best to use chess software, choosing hardware, getting psychologically ready for a game and preparing for specific opponents. He is always willing to boldly state his views, even when they run contrary to conventional chess wisdom.

"I was excited by this book because of the way all of the ideas are intertwined and you get very concrete advice … Everything is applicable and it is easy to see how it applies to the real world." – from the Foreword by GM Hjörvar Steinn Gretarsson.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Erik Kislik is an International Master originally from California who lives in Budapest. He is an expert in computer chess and one of the most in-demand chess trainers on ICC. He has coached many grandmasters and assisted a number of elite players with their opening preparation.

Chess Opening Traps for Kids

Graham Burgess

Chess becomes fun when we learn how to survive the opening and stop falling into our opponents' cheap tactical tricks.

And that's what this book is about! By understanding opening play and how to exploit tactical ideas, we turn the tables on our opponents. Now they will be the ones getting outmanoeuvred, tricked, trapped and pushed off the board!

Chess Opening Traps for Kids is a serious course on how to play the opening, illustrated with memorable and entertaining examples. By focusing on 100 key themes, Graham Burgess explains how to use opening tricks to our advantage. Every opening features hidden dangers for both players, so we need to avoid pitfalls while making full use of tactics to achieve the opening goals of purposeful development and central control.

Most of the 100 sections feature a basic example followed by a more complex one. Some of the traps have claimed grandmaster victims, while others are more likely to arise in junior chess. Either way, the aim is to learn the *theme* so well that you can use it when similar opportunities arise in your own games. A series of exercises at the end of the book allows you to check that you have grasped the main points. Throughout the book there are tips on how to spot tactics in advance and advice on opening strategy.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

Award-winning author **Graham Burgess** has written 25 chess books, ranging from general guides to works on specific openings. He is a FIDE Master and a former champion of the Danish region of Funen. In 1994 he set a world record for marathon blitz chess playing and in 1997 won the British Chess Federation Book of the Year Award. Nowadays he lives in Minnesota.

Chess Logic in Practice

Erik Kislik

Chess-players understand that it is vital to play logically, but often lack the methods needed to do so. In this book, renowned trainer Erik Kislik presents a wide range of specific concepts that will help them succeed. These include positional techniques, thinking methods, and modes of play to adopt when either better or worse.

Just the list of chapter titles shows how original Kislik's presentation is. They include:

- Painfully Slow Moves
- Focal Points
- Reciprocal Logic
- Fighting against Centralized Pieces
- When Playing a Bad Move Wins a Good Game
- A Chronically Weak King

Throughout, the discussion is illustrated by a mass of examples from both recent elite chess and the play of Kislik and his students, showing how his themes cut across all levels of chess. After the book's two main sections – **Thinking Concepts** and **Positional Concepts** – comes a section of exercises, again with a strikingly original theme: our task is simply to assess each position.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Erik Kislik is an International Master originally from California who lives in Budapest. He is an expert in computer chess and one of the most in-demand chess trainers on ICC. He has coached many grandmasters and assisted a number of elite players with their opening preparation. His previous book for Gambit, *Applying Logic in Chess*, has been widely praised.

Chess Tactics Workbook for Kids

John Nunn

This is a book for those who know the rules of chess and are keen to start winning games.

The quickest way to improve your chess is to learn tactics. But not just knowing the themes – you need to get used to using them in real positions. Master tactician John Nunn has thoughtfully crafted a course that gives you the basic nuggets of knowledge and immediately invites you to start finding tactical ideas for yourself.

Chess Tactics Workbook for Kids is the first in a new series of books that help players gain chess skills by tackling hundreds of carefully chosen exercises. The themes are similar to those in Gambit's best-selling 'Chess for Kids' series, but the focus is on getting vital hands-on experience. Many positions build on ones given earlier, showing how advanced ideas are normally made up of simpler ones that we can all grasp.

Each chapter introduces a basic theme and features dozens of exercises, with solutions that highlight the key points. In each chapter there are tips on what to look out for to help spot tactical ideas. As the chapters progress, we increasingly see how tactical ideas are combined together, with ideas from previous sections repeatedly appearing as part of a deadly one-two punch. The book ends with a series of six test papers where you are given no clues about the themes involved.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

Dr John Nunn is one of the best-respected figures in world chess. He was among the world's leading grandmasters for nearly twenty years and won four gold medals in chess Olympiads. In 2004, 2007 and 2010, Nunn was crowned World Chess Solving Champion, ahead of many former champions.

A Startling Chess Opening Repertoire: New Edition

Chris Baker and Graham Burgess

Tired of being surprised in the opening? Horrified by studying many hours each week to keep on top of the latest developments in main-line openings? Then this is the book for you!

For here is a repertoire of opening lines based on 1 e4 that are slightly off the beaten track, but full of practical sting and cunning traps for unwary opponents. All are based on rapid, healthy development, central control and play against the enemy king. You go straight from the opening into a sharp, little-explored middlegame where you will be better prepared than your opponent.

This new edition brings the repertoire completely up to date. The basic choice of main lines is unchanged, but each move has been re-examined and new ideas from practice and analysis incorporated at every turn.

- Teeming with dangerous new ideas never published anywhere else before
- Makes use of the new generation of neural-network based engines inspired by AlphaZero
- Updated by an openings expert and editor with a wealth of experience creating repertoires
- Emphasis on lines that are hard to meet in practice with the clock ticking!
- Future-proofed: recommendations against rare and untried ideas for Black

Also available on Chess Studio.

Chris Baker is an international master from England with a vast wealth of experience of chess at club and weekend tournament level. The first edition of *A Startling Chess Opening Repertoire* established his reputation as a writer and proved extremely popular, reprinting several times. Award-winning author **Graham Burgess** is a FIDE Master and a

former champion of the Danish region of Funen. In 1994 he set a world record for marathon blitz chess playing and won the British Chess Federation Book of the Year Award in 1997.

Chess Opening Workbook for Kids

Graham Burgess

This is a book for those who want to start their chess games purposefully and take full advantage of their opponents' mistakes.

It is vital to begin a chess game well. Each move needs to be useful and precise. The best way to develop the necessary know-how is by experience and practice, rather than rote learning of 'rules' and principles. It's all about the specifics and being alert to what the opponent is doing, and pouncing on any errors.

Chess Opening Workbook for Kids is the second in a new series of books that help players gain chess skills by tackling hundreds of carefully chosen exercises. The themes are similar to those in Gambit's best-selling 'Chess for Kids' series, but the focus is on getting hands-on experience. Many positions build on ones given earlier, showing how advanced ideas are normally made up of simpler ones that we can all grasp.

Each chapter is focused on a particular theme and features dozens of exercises, with solutions that highlight the main strategic and tactical points. Each chapter offers tips on opening play, such as how to detect weaknesses and poorly-placed pieces. Later chapters address key aspects of opening strategy such as the centre, development and castling. The book ends with a series of seven graded tests where you are given few clues about the themes involved.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Award-winning author **Graham Burgess** has written 27 chess books, including two on opening play for the 'Chess for Kids' series. He is a FIDE Master and a former champion of the Danish region of Funen. In 1994 he set a world record for marathon blitz chess playing.

Chess Endgame Workbook for Kids

John Nunn

This is a book for those who have started to play chess and want to know how to win from good positions and survive bad ones.

The endgame is where most games are decided, and knowing all the tricks will dramatically improve your results. Endgame specialist **John Nunn** has drawn upon his decades of experience to present the ideas that are most important in real games. Step by step he helps you uncover the key points and then add further vital knowledge.

Chess Endgame Workbook for Kids is the third in a new series of books that help players gain chess skills by solving hundreds of carefully chosen exercises. The themes are similar to those in Gambit's best-selling 'Chess for Kids' series, but the focus is on getting hands-on experience. Many positions build on ones given earlier, showing how advanced ideas are normally made up of simpler ones that we can all grasp.

Each chapter deals with a particular type of endgame and features dozens of exercises, with solutions that highlight the key points. For each endgame we are given tips on the themes that are most important and the strategies for both sides. The book ends with a series of test papers that enable you to assess your progress and identify the areas that need further work.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Also available as a German-language Kindle edition.

Dr John Nunn is one of the best-respected figures in world chess. He was among the world's leading grandmasters for nearly twenty years and won four gold medals in chess Olympiads. In 2004, 2007 and 2010, Nunn was crowned World Chess Solving Champion, ahead of many former champions.

An Idiot-Proof Chess Opening Repertoire

Graham Burgess

Ever wanted a complete chess opening repertoire – for White and Black – whose basics can be learned in a week? A strategic low-maintenance repertoire that does not require memorizing of long variations, and yet can frustrate both stronger and weaker opponents?

In this book, award-winning author Graham Burgess has come up with the ultimate simplified repertoire. But it is not based on boring or unambitious openings. The aim is to avoid symmetry and mass exchanges, and reach an unbalanced middlegame. You won't be dumped into do-or-die tactics where the penalty for forgetting a key move is an instant loss. There are plenty of sharp and aggressive ideas within these pages, but the openings chosen provide a firm and sound base for experimentation. If you forget the critical line and have to make something up at the board, then if you have understood the key strategic themes – which are explained with the use of mini-rules and reminders – then you should get a playable game.

As Black, we choose the slippery Scandinavian and a carefully crafted hybrid of the Slav and QGA. As White it is the English Opening, often with Botvinnik set-ups that will give our opponents fits! These will become your special lines, where you will know and understand more than most players, even much stronger ones.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Graham Burgess has written 28 chess books, including three on opening play for the 'Chess for Kids' series. He is a FIDE Master and a former champion of the Danish region of Funen, and in 1994 set a world record for marathon blitz chess playing.

Desert Island Chess Puzzles 1

Wesley So

If you had to choose a single luxury chess item to take to a desert island, then how about this – a superb selection of 100 puzzles to solve. In this first volume of a new series, Wesley So, Super-Grandmaster and 2017 US Champion, offers us 100 key tactics and decisions from his own recent games.

The book begins with some warm-up examples to keep you match fit. As the book progresses Wesley has arranged for your task to get harder – and harder! He writes: "I searched for instructive 'moments' which were naturally supposed to be for other players 'out there'. However, as these things often turn out, the subject-matter became educational material for my own studies in the way of self-examination. … Puzzles are meant for fun and relaxation and there is always the random possibility you might learn a few things. (I know I did!)"

Also available on Chess Studio.

Wesley So is one of the world's top players. In 2016 he won two gold medals at the Olympiad and was overall winner of the Grand Chess Tour. He followed up with a 2017 US Championship victory, and in late 2019 became the Chess960 World Champion with a commanding 13½-2½ victory over Magnus Carlsen. Originally from the Philippines, he now lives in Minnesota.

The puzzles in this new Gambit series are carefully vetted, so they instruct while providing hours of solving pleasure. It is known among top players that working on high-quality chess puzzles is an excellent way to stay tactically agile. Each 'Desert Island' book will feature 100 positions, hand-chosen by a different master or grandmaster.

Desert Island Chess Puzzles 2

Michael Adams

Some spare time on your hands? What better way to stay entertained while sharpening your chess skills than this wonderful collection of chess puzzles? Top-class grandmaster Michael Adams presents 100 positions – drawn from a wide variety of sources – that have inspired him over the years, all with clear-cut but often surprising solutions.

There are no unfair positions or 'gotchas', so club-level players should have a good chance of finding the right answers – but not until their grey cells have had a really good workout! The book starts with 25 'warm-ups' but later in the book we are getting to moves that could easily be missed – or were actually missed! – in grandmaster games.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Michael Adams has been the UK's top player for the last quarter of a century, and for years was among the world top ten. He has won a number elite-level events, including Dos Hermanas in 1995 and 1999, and Dortmund in 1998 and 2013 – in each case with former and future world champions in the field. Adams was also a FIDE world championship finalist in 2004, and a Candidate on several occasions. He writes a weekly column in the *Daily Telegraph* (London) and lives in Somerset, England.

Desert Island Chess Puzzles 3

John Nunn

Solving carefully chosen tactical exercises is a great way to develop your chess ability, and few players know more about solving than Dr John Nunn! He has drawn upon eye-catching recent games, little-known studies and games from his own playing career to produce 100 positions where there is a neat way to win or draw. In most cases, there is a tricky point to see, but few messy variations.

As with other books in this series, the first 25 exercises are ‘warm-ups’, while the final 25 are much tougher. There is something for everyone here, whether you are just looking for a few tactical ideas to help win online or club games, or if you have ambitions to become a top solver yourself.

Also available on Chess Studio.

Dr John Nunn is one of the best-respected figures in world chess. He was among the world’s leading grandmasters for nearly twenty years and won four gold medals at chess Olympiads. In 2004, 2007 and 2010, Nunn was crowned World Chess Solving Champion, ahead of many former champions. In 2011, his two-volume work *Nunn’s Chess Endings* won the English Chess Federation Book of the Year Award, and was highly praised by Levon Aronian (who read both books cover to cover!) when making the award presentation.

600 Modern Chess Puzzles

Martyn Kravtsiv

“The easiest, quickest and most effective way to improve your overall game is to increase your tactical vision. Many good positions are lost because a key moment is passed by and a player misses the opportunity to win by a beautiful combination. This book is designed simply to help you improve your play by seeing tactics better.” – Martyn Kravtsiv

Written along similar lines to Gambit’s earlier *Ultimate Chess Puzzle Book*, this new work presents 600 puzzles, mostly from the last two years, that are chosen for instructive value and maximum training benefit. To ensure that few will be familiar to readers, Kravtsiv has deliberately chosen positions from obscure games or from analysis. If you find the right answers, it will be because you worked them out yourself!

The solutions feature plenty of verbal explanations of the key points, and cover most of the logical but incorrect answers. The book is completed with a set of ‘no clues’ tests, and an index of themes that will be useful to coaches and those looking to focus on specific aspects of tactics – or just seeking extra clues!

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Martyn Kravtsiv is an experienced grandmaster from Lviv, Ukraine. His tournament results include tied first places at Cappelle in 2012 and the 2015 Ukrainian Championship, as well as being blitz champion of the 2008 World Mind Sports Games (at age 17). He represented his country at the 2017 World Team Championship and was a coach for the team that won silver medals at the 2016 Olympiad.

The Chess Endgame Exercise Book

John Nunn

Everyone knows they should work on their endgame play. So many hard-earned advantages are squandered in ‘simple’ endings… But it’s tough finding a way to study endings that doesn’t send you to sleep and that helps you actually remember and apply what you have learnt.

“While endgame theory books are helpful, active participation by the reader is a great aid to learning. I hope that this book of endgame exercises will encourage readers to put their brains in high gear, both to test themselves and to learn more about the endgame. I have spent several months selecting the 444 exercises in this book from what was initially a much larger collection.” – John Nunn

All major types of endgame are covered, together with a wide-ranging chapter on endgame tactics. Examples are drawn from recent practice or from little-known studies. The emphasis is on understanding and applying endgame principles and rules of thumb. You will learn by experience, but always backed up by Nunn’s expert guidance to ensure that the lessons you take away from the book are correct and useful.

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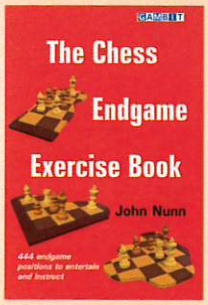
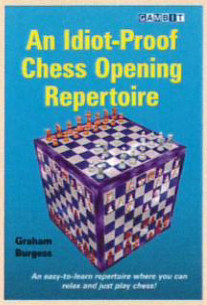
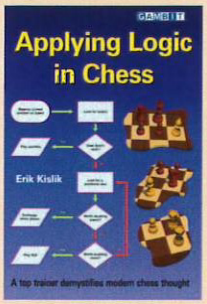
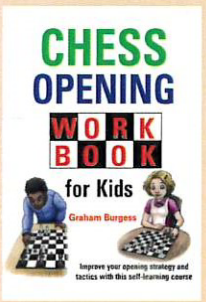
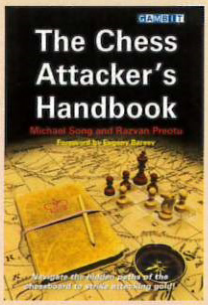
Other chess titles from Gambit include:

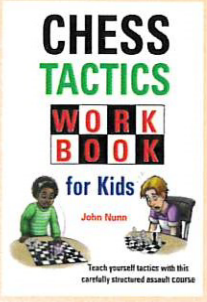


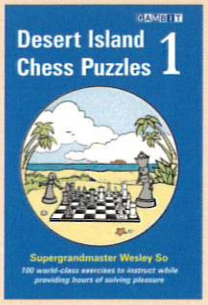


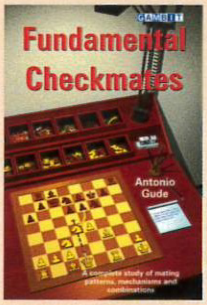












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